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TAIWAN'S 2004 PRESIDENTIAL AND
VICE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION:
DEMOCRACY'S CONSOLIDATION
OR DEVOLUTION?

John F. Copper

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John F. Copper*

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	2
Recent Elections: The Setting	3
Pre-election Politics	12
Candidates and Their Platforms	21
The Campaign.....	33
Results, Interpretations, Reactions	47
In the Aftermath of the Election.....	57
Conclusions	71
Glossary.....	80

* John F. Copper is the Stanley J. Buckman Professor of International Studies at Rhodes College in Memphis, Tennessee. He is the author of more than twenty books on China and Taiwan.

INTRODUCTION

On March 20, 2004, voters in the Republic of China (the country more commonly known as Taiwan) went to the polls to cast ballots for their favorite presidential and vice-presidential candidates. This was the country's twelfth competitive national election (its thirteenth if the 1994 election of Taiwan's provincial governor, provincial assembly, metropolitan mayors, and city councils is counted). It was Taiwan's eleventh presidential election and its third direct election for president and vice president.¹ More importantly, it was the first presidential election following the change in ruling parties in 2000 when President CHEN Shui-bian was elected to that office, arguably having far-reaching effects on Taiwan politically and in almost every other way.

This was the first election in the country's history accompanied by referendums. It was the first two-ticket election and the first in which two parties jointly nominated a set of candidates. It saw what was probably a precedent for televised national debates between the presidential candidates. The campaign witnessed the country's largest campaign rallies ever. And, this was clearly the nation's most hotly contested election ever and the one with the most at stake for both sides.

The run-up to the voting witnessed the only assassination attempt during an election campaign and the only one made on a sitting president. One day before the voting both President Chen and Vice President Lu were shot while stumping in southern Taiwan. They were not hurt seriously, but the event shocked the nation

1. For an assessment of previous elections, see John F. Copper with George P. Chen, *Taiwan's Elections: Political Development and Democratization in the Republic of China*, Baltimore: Occasional Papers/Reprints Series in Contemporary Asian Studies (OPRSCAS), Univ. of Maryland School of Law, 1984; John F. Copper, *Taiwan's Recent Elections: Fulfilling the Democratic Promise*, Baltimore: OPRSCAS, Univ. of Maryland School of Law, 1990; John F. Copper, *Taiwan's 1991 and 1992 Non-Supplemental Elections: Reaching a Higher State of Democracy*, Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1994; John F. Copper, *Taiwan's Mid-1990s Elections: Taking the Final Steps to Democracy*, Westport, CT: Praeger Publisher, 1998; John F. Copper, *Taiwan's 1998 Legislative Yuan, Metropolitan Mayoral and City Council Elections: Confirming and Consolidating Democracy in the Republic of China*, Baltimore: OPRSCAS, Univ. of Maryland School of Law, 1999; John F. Copper, *Taiwan's 2000 Presidential and Vice Presidential Election: Consolidating Democracy and Creating a New Era of Politics*, Baltimore: Maryland Series in Contemporary Asian Studies (MSCAS), Univ. of Maryland School of Law, 2000; John F. Copper, *Taiwan's 2001 Legislative, Magistrates and Mayors Election: Further Consolidating Democracy*, Singapore: World Scientific/Singapore University Press, 2002.

and influenced the election campaign and undoubtedly the results. The murky circumstances of the shooting, the disenfranchisement of a number of military personnel and police, and the large number of invalid votes cast serious doubts on the legitimacy and the validity of the election. Giving more salience to the calls to challenge the election results, it was Taiwan's closest presidential election: CHEN Shui-bian and Annette Lu won by fewer than 30,000 votes.

After the votes were counted and amidst mass protest by blue team supporters, who charged the "country was stolen," LIEN Chan asked for a recount of votes and filed papers with the court to annul the election. This also was a first. Lingering questions about the shooting along with doubts about the fairness of the campaign plagued Taiwan in the months after the election and seemed to mean that Taiwan would suffer serious political polarization for some time.

Taiwan is a "vortex nation" that is capable of provoking a conflict between the world's two major powers, the United States and China. President Chen and the green bloc provoked such a conflict during the campaign. Thus, this election deserves serious study not simply as the assessment of an exercise in democratic governance in a "model country," but also from the perspective of U.S.-China relations and international politics. Finally, the fact that the Taiwan Strait is regarded as the world's number one "flashpoint" gives meaning to Taiwanese politics, which this election epitomizes, extending far beyond its borders.

RECENT ELECTIONS: THE SETTING

In order to understand the political milieu, campaign platforms, and voter perceptions in Taiwan during the 2004 election campaign, and to help interpret the election's results, it is beneficial to revisit Taiwan's most recent election campaigns and their results. These notably include the presidential election of 2000, the legislative election in 2001, and the mayoral elections in Taiwan's two metropolitan cities in 2002. These elections caused Taiwan to become polarized socially and politically, its government to be paralyzed by gridlock, and ethnic and other ill feelings to run high. These factors could not but influence the 2004 political milieu in Taiwan. These elections also set trends and determined issues for the 2004 election campaign.

In March 2000, CHEN Shui-bian, representing the then opposition Democratic Progressive Party, won the presidential election in a three-way race that saw the conservative vote split after James

Soong (according to various opinion surveys the most popular of any of Taiwan's politicians, at times double the others in the polls) was refused the Nationalist Party (or Kuomintang, KMT) nomination.² Soong had little recourse but to run as an independent. In response, the Nationalist Party used every means at its disposal to impair his campaign, including releasing previously confidential documents about Soong's activities when he was secretary-general of the party, one of which implicated him in financial malfeasance.³ The KMT's candidate, LIEN Chan, however, failed to benefit as was intended from the handicap rendered to Soong. As a consequence, Chen won the election, by default according to most observers.

Chen thus became president without a mandate, or at best a weak one.⁴ He received less than 40 percent of the popular vote. But since there was no provision in Taiwan's constitution for a run-off election, the results stood.⁵ Furthermore, in spite of Soong's precipitous drop in popularity after the KMT exposed his alleged financial wrongdoings, Chen lost to Soong in almost every voting district in north, east, and west Taiwan plus the Offshore Islands and among female voters and all minority groups. Offsetting this, Chen won big among his ethnic group (Taiwanese hailing from Fukien Province) in south Taiwan.⁶

The way CHEN Shui-bian campaigned is also instructive. Chen, who was previously known (famous or infamous most would say, depending on their view of him) for his staunch advocacy of Taiwan's separation from China, astutely played this down during the campaign. He took a moderate position on the independence issue (suggesting it was appropriate only if China took military ac-

2. Copper, *Taiwan's 2000 Presidential and Vice Presidential Election*, p. 15.

3. *Ibid.*, pp. 19-20.

4. Most pundits considered a mandate to mean getting more than fifty percent of the popular vote. This was the case during the only other direct election of the president in 1996. See Copper, *Taiwan's Mid-1990s Elections*, chapter 4.

5. There had been discussions about a run-off election for some time even during the debate at the time of amending the Constitution. Nothing was done because other matters seemed more important. For details, see *ibid.*, p. 46.

6. Copper, *Taiwan's 2000 Presidential and Vice Presidential Elections*, pp. 44-45. Taiwan's population is made up of four ethnic groups: two groups of Taiwanese (from Fukien Province and Hakka that have no province in China), Mainland Chinese (that came from various places in China after World War II), and the original inhabitants or Aborigines. Fukien Taiwanese are about 65-plus percent of the population, Hakka and Mainland Chinese are about 15 percent each, and Aborigines are somewhat less than 2 percent. Taiwan has a history of ethnic tension and violence among the four groups.

tion against the island), while promising to improve cross-strait relations. Most advocates of an independent Taiwan did not believe he had changed his stripes, so lacking another good choice, they voted for him.⁷ The other candidates, namely Soong and Lien, failed to use Chen's alleged "dangerous" advocacy of independence (which in the past had caused apprehension among many voters) against him effectively. Chen exploited the issue of "black gold" (money politics or the connection between criminals with money and politicians), and used it against the Nationalist Party's LIEN Chan while benefiting significantly from the charges against Soong being pursued relentlessly by the KMT. The economy (which was Chen's vulnerability) did not become an issue, quite unlike all previous election campaigns. Economic growth and the nation's prosperity were taken for granted by most voters, with economic matters being overshadowed to some extent by the environment, welfare, and other social issues to Chen's advantage.⁸ Chen claimed his experience as mayor of Taipei was sufficient to effectively manage the country's economy and many voters believed him. Chen also played the "race card" (exploiting ethnic or sub-ethnic antipathy in Taiwan). Toward the end of the campaign he was given a boost by a voter backlash generated when China's Premier ZHU Rongji attacked him, warning voters just before Election Day not to vote for him.⁹ This not only engendered voter ire but also accentuated ethnic feelings at a critical moment, both working to Chen's benefit.

Intraparty politics and a unique set of circumstances present in his party also facilitated CHEN Shui-bian's victory. Throughout the campaign Chen managed to keep his political party, the DPP, united. In the past, it had been plagued frequently by internal disputes and factionalism that most often related to the issue of Taiwan's independence.¹⁰ HSU Hsin-liang, a former head of the DPP and one of its most respected leaders, bolted the party and ran as an

7. Some of Chen's supporters were simply devoted. Others voted for him for ethnic reasons. The Taiwan Independence Party, which took a much stronger stance on independence, was seen as having no chance to win the election. See Copper, *Taiwan's 2000 Presidential and Vice Presidential Election*, pp. 30-31.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 31-32.

9. *Ibid.*, pp. 41-42.

10. See CHAO Chien-min, "The Democratic Progressive Party's Factional Politics and Taiwan's Independence," in John F. Copper (ed.), *Taiwan in Troubled Times: Essays on the Chen Shui-bian Presidency*, Singapore: World Scientific, 2002, pp. 101-122 for an assessment of DPP factionalism.

independent, but his campaign sputtered early.¹¹ The Taiwan Independence Party meanwhile failed to gain any traction. On the other side, the split between Soong and Lien (or more accurately President Lee Teng-hui) was very serious throughout the entire campaign, some describing it as a “death wish.”¹² Because of this, as the campaign proceeded, it appeared more and more that Chen had a chance to win. Since many DPP leaders as well as rank-and-file members were hungry for power and knew that realizing that dream required putting internal differences aside, they did so. This also helped keep Chen’s party from succumbing to serious centrifugal tendencies.

As if his unexpected election victory, the lack of a clear mandate, and extreme hard feelings in the Soong and Lien camps were not enough, Chen became president of a nation with a mixed (some would say conflicted) political system wherein presidential powers were (and are still) not well defined. This had not been relevant when the Nationalist Party was in power, since the ruling party controlled the legislative and judicial branches of government. But now it made a huge difference. Chen’s party held only one-third of the seats in the legislature. Were he to have concurred with opposition critics that the system was a parliamentary one (as the Constitution in many ways suggested), Chen would have been marginalized and rendered a figurehead or an irrelevant president.¹³

The new president considered trying to stitch together a coalition. But just as he took office, James Soong formed a new political party, the People First Party (PFP), and forthwith aligned with the Nationalist Party against Chen. (Chen becoming president made them realize they had a common foe.) This fostered constant stalemate, paralyzing Chen’s agenda and stymieing his efforts to reform or fix the political system, not to mention the negative impact it had on civility and interparty relations. Six months into his presidency, the two opposition parties joined forces to impeach Chen. Although they did not have enough votes to remove him from office (that

11. Copper, *Taiwan’s 2000 Presidential and Vice Presidential Election*, p. 50.

12. Many perceived that the “blood feud” between President Lee and Soong was at the bottom of this. Lee was said to be behind the release of party records that damaged Soong and nixed any effort by party leaders to get Soong to accept second place on the ticket with Lien, which some said he was willing to do.

13. Taiwan’s Constitution is unclear about what kind of political system it has: presidential, parliamentary or cabinet. It is a combination of all three. Some have called it a semi-presidential system. For details on the constitutional origins of the problem, see Joseph Wu, *Taiwan’s Democratization: Forces behind the New Momentum*, Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 1995, pp. 24-28.

being very difficult in Taiwan's political system), their efforts seriously worsened interparty relations and further deepened political gridlock.¹⁴

The economy promptly took a nosedive, largely as a result of these events. Chen's lack of experience and/or a viable economic plan were also factors. However, the DPP claimed the recession (which it soon became) happened mainly for other reasons including the global recession, especially in information technology, and KMT chicanery in dumping stocks to depress the market while blocking Chen's economic reform proposals. The next year Taiwan witnessed negative growth in its gross national product — something unknown to most people living at the time. Factories cut production or closed down. Many moved to China. Unemployment skyrocketed, reaching levels unimaginable by most in Taiwan and previously experienced by few.¹⁵

President Chen was put in a serious dilemma concerning what remedies to adopt. Business people wanted to expand Taiwan's economic relations with China. But many DPP members, including Vice-President Annette Lu and former president LEE Teng-hui (now supporting Chen), did not. They thought this would create a dependency on China that would cause Taiwan to lose its sovereignty.¹⁶ Chen tried to have it both ways. He supported more extensive cross-strait commercial relations while talking more about Taiwan being politically separate or independent. The opposition parties were on Chen's side regarding promoting economic ties with China. In fact, they argued it was the only way Taiwan could get out of its economic depression. But, unlike Chen, they contended better political relations were crucial to making this work.¹⁷ Thus their

14. Immediately at issue was Taiwan's fourth nuclear power plant that was approved by the previous administration and was partially built. Chen and his party campaigned against nuclear power, and Chen cancelled work on it at this time. The opposition claimed that what he had done was unconstitutional since it had been sanctioned by the legislature and furthermore that Taiwan needed the electricity. The opposition was still reeling from its election defeat and for a number of reasons, especially Chen employing the issue of corruption against them during the campaign, this imbroglio resulted in extreme bitterness. For details, see John F. Copper, "Taiwan in Gridlock," in John F. Copper (ed.), *Taiwan in Troubled Times: Essays on the Chen Shui-bian Presidency*, Singapore: World Scientific, 2002, pp. 43-48.

15. *Ibid.*, pp. 36-42.

16. For details, see *ibid.* p. 27.

17. For an academic discussion of this point, see CHAO Chien-min, "Will Economic Integration between Mainland China and Taiwan Lead to a Congenial Political Culture?" *Asian Survey*, March/April 2003, pp. 281-304.

support for Chen on this issue was a double-edged sword. Observers said Chen, on this issue and in general, was walking a tightrope.

Meanwhile, KMT and PFP leaders (though not Lien or Soong) made frequent well-publicized visits to China, sometimes in what seemed an official capacity inasmuch as Chinese officials received them with considerable pomp and fanfare and discussed political matters of substance with them. Thus it appeared the opposition was in charge of cross-strait relations. This embarrassed the president and his administration. In riposte, Chen sought to brandish his diplomatic skills (which he for the most part lacked, including the ability to speak English). Constitutionally, he had prerogatives in this realm, which he did not have in handling domestic affairs. He thus became more active in foreign policymaking. But Beijing sought at every turn to thwart Chen's efforts, often to his chagrin. Most of the time this hurt cross-strait relations, not to mention Taiwan's diplomacy elsewhere.¹⁸

Adding to President Chen's problems, the military and security forces and the intelligence agencies, which were staffed largely by people of a different ethnic group from his and who despised him and his independence views, began to oppose, overtly at times, his cross-strait policies (especially his view that Taiwan should not be considered part of China). Worse, they challenged Chen at a time when relations with China were deteriorating and their loyalty was needed more than ever.

The specifics were both telling and ominous. Soon after Chen became president a number of top military officers resigned, including many Air Force pilots. This brought into question Taiwan's military preparedness. Later some high-ranking intelligence people defected to China, presumably taking vast stores of secret information with them. Many in the intelligence agencies said this happened because Chen advocated "splitting China," and his administration had targeted them in an "ethnic cleansing" campaign. They called Chen a traitor and worse. The hostile feelings were mutual and were reciprocated. Chen's people began to refer to the military, security, and intelligence agencies as being "populated by outsiders" (meaning Mainland Chinese, as opposed to Taiwanese), who did not see Taiwan as home and were not loyal to its popularly elected government.¹⁹ Meanwhile, the People's Liber-

18. Copper, "Taiwan in Gridlock," p. 26.

19. John F. Copper, "Taiwan: Consolidating its Democracy?" *China: An International Journal*, September 2003, pp. 334-36.

ation Army had launched a frenetic-paced military buildup (especially in missiles) in the area just across the Taiwan Strait for the purpose of intimidating Taipei, or quarantining or invading the island if need be.

Social relations in Taiwan also devolved. Because of the Chen administration's pro-Fukien Taiwanese favoritism, ethnic tension increased with the Mainland Chinese, Hakka, and aboriginal minorities.²⁰ All reported a rise in ethnic discrimination and ill treatment by the new government. Chen tried to win support from the latter two groups and thus "divide and conquer" the minorities that he perceived were aligned against him. But this only made matters worse. Meanwhile, his supporters increasingly pressured Chen to support their language and culture and appoint them in large numbers to government positions, which he did. Ethnic relations thus continued to deteriorate.

The legislative election in late 2001 should have helped alleviate the political standoff and relieve the malaise then afflicting Taiwan's domestic politics. Hence, the prospects for the DPP winning a resounding victory and becoming the largest party in the legislature made it appear that Chen might be able put his agenda into law after the election. As a consequence, he put many decisions on hold and declined to try to improve interparty relations. At this juncture, former president LEE Teng-hui formed a new party (actually done by a Lee surrogate, Huang Chu-wen), the Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU). Lee hoped to persuade members of the KMT that had supported him when he was president and favored his policy of localization to defect and join the TSU. This made the election a four-party, two-bloc contest.²¹

The issues dominating the 2001 election campaign were much the same as in 2000. The KMT and PFP (now called the blue team, for the color of the KMT's flag) focused much of their attention on the economy while castigating Chen for the country's bad times. Blue team leaders at every turn labeled him incompetent. Pan-blue strategists also cited political instability, crime, social disorder, and ethnic tensions as serious problems that only they could fix. The DPP and the TSU (the green bloc, after the DPP's party color) made the issues of Taiwan's national identity, the KMT's past oppression and corruption, and their contribution to democratization

20. *Ibid.*, pp. 332-34.

21. For details on events leading up to the 2001 election and the campaign, see John F. Copper, *Taiwan's 2001 Legislative, Magistrates and Mayors Election: Further Consolidating Democracy*, Singapore: World Scientific/Singapore University Press, 2002.

part of their election platform. The green team had the advantage of incumbency, being seen as the ruling party (though it was not in the majority in the Legislative Yuan or lawmaking body of government). President Chen again proved to be an indefatigable and effective campaigner, and he succored many candidates that were members of his party by stumping with or for them.²²

When the votes were counted, the DPP had won 87 seats in the 225-member legislature, a gain of 20 seats. Observers called this a “momentous victory” for Chen’s party. However, Soong’s party, the PFP, won even bigger, or at least more than the DPP proportionally. In fact, its performance was remarkable for a party that was just over a year old. The KMT lost big; it won only 68 seats (compared to the 123 it had won in the last legislative election and the 110 it held going into this election).²³ The TSU did well for a newly launched party, winning 13 seats. Independents that had served at times as a buffer between the two “camps” were almost absent from the legislature when the new term began.²⁴

The DPP and TSU together attained a near, but not quite outright, majority in the legislature, which proved critical. Moreover, the opposition remained hostile and resentful. This election, in fact, worsened relations between the two sides and further polarized the country’s politics. There were reasons for this other than simply a close election and a hard fought campaign. The DPP had won by playing the “ethnic card” (polarizing the country along ethnic lines to their advantage) and by employing “voter allocation” (a very undemocratic practice involving a party or parties instructing supporters for whom to vote so that popular candidates would not win too big, thus allowing more of their candidates to win).²⁵ Even some DPP stalwarts were embarrassed by how they won. However, the victory was not total, since a majority was not won in the legislature.²⁶

In December, an election that was called by some Taiwan’s “mid-term” and a “bellwether” to predict the March 2004 presidential election, was held for the mayorships of Taiwan’s metropolitan

22. *Ibid.*, pp. 24-39.

23. The difference in the number of seats is accounted for by KMT defections, mainly to the PFP.

24. *Ibid.*, pp. 53-67.

25. This, of course, caused some popular candidates to lose. It also distorted the issues since many popular candidates were pushing certain reforms.

26. Copper, *Taiwan’s 2001 Legislative, Magistrates and Mayors Election*, pp. 68-77.

cities: Taipei and Kaohsiung.²⁷ In 1998, MA Ying-jeou, one of the shining stars of the Nationalist Party, had defeated incumbent Taipei mayor CHEN Shui-bian, for which Chen harbored considerable resentment. Ma was now seeking reelection. Frank Hsieh, mayor of Kaohsiung, was also running for another term. Ma won in what the KMT said was a landslide, to the humiliation of the DPP and President Chen. The DPP's Hsieh won, but in a close race — one the blue team might have won had it agreed on a common candidate earlier and/or run a better campaign.²⁸ Although these were mere local elections, national issues were part of the campaign. And, voters were said to be evaluating the Chen administration. The results indicated a less than positive assessment of Chen.

After the election, various public opinion polls showed that MA Ying-jeou was Taiwan's most popular official and would defeat Chen if they faced each other in the next presidential election contest.²⁹ But Ma said he would not be a candidate and preferred to remain at the job he had just been chosen for. As a matter of fact, Ma was considered by many in his party to be too young (52 at the time); Lien and Soong were both senior to him.³⁰ Thus there seemed little chance Ma would enter the presidential contest. The real question then was: Would Lien and Soong reach some agreement on a common (KMT/PFP) ticket and do it soon enough and in such a way as to dampen ill feelings in each of their parties toward the other so the Pan-blue team might defeat Chen in March?

27. These two cities have a special legal status in Taiwan. Taipei is the largest city and the capital. Kaohsiung is the second largest city, the largest city in the south, and the country's biggest port. Thus the mayors are well known political figures, and they are elected in separate elections from other mayors.

28. For details on this election, see John F. Copper, "Taiwan's Mid-Term Election," *China Brief*, December 20, 2002 (available online at <http://china.jamestown.org/pub/view/cwe_002_025_003.htm>).

29. A host of opinion surveys showed Ma to be very popular and many people wanted him to run for president. Females and younger voters were especially strong supporters. The polls indicated also, contrary to what had been popular wisdom, that Ma had little support in southern Taiwan. Surveys that put Ma on the KMT ticket with Lien showed them defeating a Chen-Lu ticket or an even stronger Chen-Yu (premier). For details on some of these polls, see "Polls Favor Ma as Pro-Blue Contender in '04," *Taiwan News*, December 9, 2002 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/TN/2002/TN-120902.htm>>).

30. LIEN Chan was 66 at the time. James Soong was 60. Both Lien and Soong had considerable more experience in high office than Ma, Lien more than Soong. Lien was also head of the Nationalist Party, Ma's party.

PRE-ELECTION POLITICS

Lien and Soong did work out a deal, and they did so quickly. Just a week after the mayoral elections the two met and hammered out an arrangement for a “unified ticket,” with Lien heading the ticket and Soong taking second chair as his vice-presidential running mate. Lien said that in 2000 “splitting the KMT had benefited a third party” (meaning Chen), and this problem was to be avoided. The two party leaders also noted that their parties had supported a joint candidate in the December 2002 Kaohsiung mayoral race and that Soong’s party, the PFP, had not entered the Taipei mayoral race with its own candidate but instead supported Ma, indicating cooperation between the two parties would work. Spokespersons for the two parties pointed out that the blue team (Lien and Soong together) had gotten 20 percent more votes than Chen in 2000 and concluded that they could win by working together this time.³¹

The blue team immediately launched a publicity campaign focusing on the Chen administration’s “misrule” and the “bad state of affairs” in Taiwan. What they said had resonance. A survey conducted at the time by a popular local magazine showed that almost half of the population had a negative view about the coming year (49.9 percent), nearly double that of a year earlier. Half described President Chen’s ability to lead the country as “bad.” Just 11 percent gave him a good rating while 31 percent said he was so-so. Some 50 percent said they were disappointed with their national leader, up from 34 percent over the past 12 months. Only 2.4 percent said they were happy with the economy. Some 37 percent feared being thrown out of a job, and 54 percent felt that society was not safe.³² Almost coinciding with the release of this poll, the DPP suffered a blow to its claim to be a clean party when its choice for Kaohsiung City Council speaker, who had earlier been convicted in a financial scandal, was charged with vote buying. The public was angry. Reflecting this, a well-known pro-DPP reporter

31. “KMT, PFP Agree to Field Single Ticket for 2004,” *China Post*, December 15, 2002.

32. “Poll Shows People More Pessimistic about Future,” *China Post*, December 28, 2002 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/News/2002/CP-122802-htm>>). The magazine cited was *Commonwealth*, which has been doing an annual survey asking these questions for the past decade.

predicted in a widely read newspaper column that the DPP would lose the presidential election.³³

Almost as if hearing a wakeup call, Chen ordered his administration and the DPP into campaign mode. In January, a high ranking Chen administration official visited China in order to work out travel and communications links between Taiwan and the mainland. Better cross-strait relations had long been a Pan-blue issue; Chen wanted to change that. But the two opposition parties responded quickly. Blue team spokespersons strongly supported the idea and several of their leaders made special efforts to see it work, calculating that they could get the issue back and use it to their advantage. Come Lunar New Year, in large part arranged by a top blue bloc leader, John Chang, charter flights began to fly to China, stopping only briefly in Hong Kong or Macao. Business people were delighted and hoped that regular direct flights would follow. But that was not to be. Vice President Annette Lu, Mainland Affairs Council (MAC) head TSAI Ying-wen, and others in the Chen administration expressed reservations about the deal. Tsai said shortly after that negotiations for permanent links had to be carried out on a government-to-government basis, obviously a deal breaker.³⁴ Chinese leaders in Beijing had long refused government-to-government talks with Taipei and continued to do so. Later President Chen himself ruled out implementing direct links.³⁵

It appeared that Chen, rather than seeking better relations with China, wanted instead to pick a fight hoping to capitalize on the latent anger among many in Taiwan toward China that had helped him in the 2000 election.³⁶ Shortly after this, he announced that he wanted referendums to be made part of the ballot for the March election.³⁷ President Chen also came out in favor of Taiwan participating in Washington's plan for theater missile defense in

33. "Chu Crisis Shows the People Hate Black-Gold Politics," *Taipei Times*, December 27, 2002 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/TT/2002/TT-122702.htm>>). The reporter's column, incidentally, was not published.

34. Shelley Rigger, "Taiwan in 2003: Plenty of Clouds, Few Silver Linings," *Asian Survey*, January-February 2004, p. 183.

35. LIN Chieh-yu, "President Rules out Implementing Direct Links," *Taipei Times*, February 27, 2003 (available online at <<http://www.taipeitimes.com>>).

36. Polls at the time indicated Chen needed to solidify his base and picking a quarrel with China would do just that.

37. The referendums would help Chen win votes, assuming the public liked them. The issue also underscored Chen's reputation for democratizing Taiwan. Incidentally, President Chen may have also been responding to support China was getting from other countries in opposition to the referendums. At this time, he suspended high level

East Asia, another very sensitive issue to Beijing.³⁸ It seemed the die had been cast: the president planned to play the "China card" though he would have to sacrifice better relations with the business community.

In mid-March, Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) hit Taiwan. This further strained cross-strait relations and worked to President Chen's benefit. SARS, which originated in China, spread to Taiwan and evoked feelings that China had a bad influence on the island. Making matters much worse, Beijing overtly opposed the World Health Organization (WHO) helping Taiwan. Because Taipei had been trying to attain observer status in WHO and had applied to send experts on SARS to a coming WHO summit meeting, this angered many people. President Chen perceived he was on the right side of this growing controversy and declared loudly that to resolve the SARS problem Taiwan should not be isolated. The U.S. House of Representatives agreed and passed a resolution calling on the Department of State to help Taipei get representation at a WHO meeting.³⁹ This also helped Chen's popularity.

In late March, the KMT formally nominated Lien to be its presidential candidate and Soong to be his running mate. Lien promptly declared that after winning the election he would make a "journey of peace" to China (using the same words that former president LEE Teng-hui had employed in his May 1996 inauguration address). President Chen responded saying it would be a "journey of surrender" and tantamount to denying the Republic of China's sovereignty. "I don't think such a person is likely to be elected," he said.⁴⁰ Pundits felt Chen won another round.

Meanwhile, former president LEE Teng-hui publicly called for writing a new constitution that would change the name of the country from the Republic of China to the Republic of Taiwan. This seemed too radical for even the Chen administration and Premier YU Shyi-kun rejected the proposal saying it would sabotage rela-

visits to France and accused President Chirac of "meddling in Taiwan's affairs" for telling visiting Chinese President HU Jintao that the referendum was a "grave error."

38. "Chen Calls for Positive Response to U.S. Plan for Missile Defense," *Taiwan News*, February 26, 2003 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/TN/2003/TN-022603.htm>>).

39. W.H. Kuo and P.C. Tang, "Taiwan Should Be Admitted to WHO: U.S. Congressman," *Central Daily News*, April 10, 2003 (available online at <<http://www.lexisnexus.com>>).

40. *Taiwan Headlines*, *Can News*, March 30 and 31, 2003.

tions across the Taiwan Strait. A public opinion survey at the time indicated 27 percent of respondents supported Lee's idea and 49 percent opposed it. Another poll showed that only 17 percent of the public favored Lee's continued involvement in the political scene, signaling a problem for Chen and DPP-TSU cooperation in the coming campaign.⁴¹ In response to Lee's proposal, but probably more to turn the issue into an advantage and because activists had already begun to agitate for a referendum on canceling construction of Taiwan's fourth nuclear power plant, President Chen again took up the issue of holding referendums.⁴² In fact, he cleverly redefined the issues, making them much less controversial. Chen said that a referendum would "highlight the consensus and determination of Taiwan to participate in WHO." The population of Taiwan was on his side on this matter, as was the U.S. Congress, which reflected popular opinion in the United States. Chen's actions (in defiance of China) also served to burnish his independence credentials, which would help him in the polls in March.⁴³

But the idea of holding a referendum, as it became a more serious proposal, caused alarm in Washington and certainly in Beijing. The reason for this was that the DPP, when in opposition before 2000, had often broached the idea of holding a referendum to promote Taiwan's independence.⁴⁴ When Washington expressed concern about the referendum because it contradicted America's one-China policy, Vice President Lu declared that the U.S. was in no position to oppose it, as the referendum was a basic human right and a "democratic mechanism."⁴⁵ President Chen in essence seconded her view.⁴⁶ Washington, it appeared, did not quite know how to respond.

While President Chen's popularity was given a boost at first, it was later adversely affected by the SARS problem and some other sticky issues. In June, the president's approval rating dropped to a new low of 27 percent (compared with 59 percent who were dissatisfied), with almost half of these polled saying they were unhappy

41. See *World Journal*, March 17, 2003 and *Taipei Times*, March 19, 2003.

42. "Legal Experts Debate Referendum Law," *Taipei Times*, April 7, 2003, p. 3.

43. Rigger, "Taiwan in 2003," pp. 185-86.

44. The word for referendum in Chinese, *gong tou*, also encompasses the idea of plebiscite or deciding matters relating to sovereignty. There is no separate word for plebiscite in Chinese. This, in fact, has led to some confusion and difficulty over the referendum matter.

45. LIN Chieh-yu, "Lu Stands by Chen Tells US to Back off over Referendums," *Taipei Times*, June 26, 2003 (available online at <<http://www.taipeitimes.com>>).

46. Rigger, "Taiwan in 2003," p. 186.

with his handling of SARS.⁴⁷ However, as differences with China escalated, with Beijing blocking the World Health Organization from helping Taiwan and opposing its membership in the organization, Chen's poll numbers improved a bit. In this context, President Chen openly rejected China's one-China policy and seemed to be trying even more seriously to provoke strained relations in order to help his election campaign.⁴⁸

In early August an election was held in Hualien County following the death of the magistrate there. Though a small county, the campaign soon became a spirited contest between the blue and green camps. Some said that it being the last election before the 2004 presidential election, it would have an impact on voters in March. The previous magistrate was KMT and Hualien was a Nationalist Party stronghold, so it was thought that a loss by the blue team would be especially ominous. The DPP believed it could appeal successfully to voters because Hualien was a poor county and relied heavily on government financial help, which the Chen administration had provided. In that connection, the DPP's candidate YOU Ying-lung promised NT\$170 billion in public money to the county, a tactic which the blue team labeled "vote buying through policies."⁴⁹ Seen as an important election, heavyweights from both sides came to help their candidates, including President CHEN Shui-bian, Premier Yu, and, on the other side, LIEN Chan and James Soong.

After the votes were counted the media reported the blue candidate, HSIEH Shen-san, had won big. Hsieh got over half of the votes cast in a three-way race, while the DPP's candidate got only 28.9 percent of the vote. The media labeled this a "landslide victory." Hsieh's winning margin was also a surprise inasmuch as it was considerably higher than the polls had predicted (more than thirty thousand votes as compared to the five thousand that were forecast by the opinion surveys). Observers said Hsieh had benefited from his ability and reputation and by President Chen's and

47. "President's Approval Rating Drops to 27%, TV Station Survey Reveals," Associated Press, June 10, 2003 (available online at <<http://www.http://taiwansecurity.org/AP/2003/AP-061003.htm>>).

48. See "Chen Says He Is Disappointed with Hu Jintao," *China Post*, July 5, 2003, p. 1.

49. Dennis Engbarth, "Hualien Election Results Demonstrate DPP in Need of Transformation," *Taiwan News*, August 3, 2003 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/TN/2003/TN-080303.htm>>).

the DPP's sagging images, the economy, and other factors.⁵⁰ Also pundits said the DPP made a mistake in overusing television and giving the impression it was interfering in the campaign by overzealously searching for vote buying. In any case, the election was a major setback for President Chen and his party. Some said it was a bellwether of things to come.⁵¹

President Chen seemed to regain some momentum in September after the government put the word "Taiwan" on the country's new passport. Judging from the turnout at subsequent rallies, it helped his reelection prospects. LEE Teng-hui organized a gathering that attracted thirty to fifty thousand, compared to an opposition rally that was attended by only three to seven thousand.⁵² Observers said Chen had "struck a chord" and had found (or rediscovered) a hot issue, local nationalism, to use going into the election. Some spoke of him "playing the China bogeyman card."

Soon after this, at the 17th anniversary of the founding of the DPP in late September, without giving any prior warning, President Chen announced that he wanted to rewrite the Constitution by 2006. He said that Taiwan sorely needed political reform and that amendments made to the Constitution in the 1990s had not been sufficient. But Chen said that his intent was not to move Taiwan toward independence.⁵³ LIEN Chan, however, retorted that this represented a definite move toward independence, since the Constitution refers specifically to the "Republic of China." Lien further asserted that Chen sought to provoke Beijing in order to divert attention away from his administration's failures and to bring back core supporters for the coming election.⁵⁴ Washington's reaction was not a positive one: AIT's Douglas Paal and the State Department's Richard Boucher both said they expected Chen to live up to his May 2000 pledge not to declare independence.⁵⁵

In late October, President Chen made a brief (transit) visit to the United States where he gave a public address and received a human rights award. He also spoke to the media. The U.S. govern-

50. LIN Chieh-yu, "Pan-blue Candidate Sins Hualien Vote," *Taipei Times*, August 3, 2001 (available online at <<http://www.taipeitimes.com>>).

51. "'Pan-blue' Wins Hualien Prelude to 2004 Poll," *China Post*, August 3, 2003 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/CP/2003/CP-090903.htm>>).

52. Kessings Contemporary Archives, Vol. 49, No. 9, 2003, p. 45599.

53. "Chen Outlines Plan for New Constitution," *China Post*, October 1, 2003, p. 1.

54. *Ibid.*

55. Amber Wang, "New Constitution Plan Seems to be Unfavorable to U.S. Authorities," *China Post*, October 1, 2003, p. 1.

ment had allowed Chen more slack than usual during the stay. In fact, this was the first time a Taiwan president had been this visible in the United States since 1979.⁵⁶ The visit was clearly a plus for Chen's election efforts.⁵⁷ Later Chen met Secretary of State Colin Powell in Panama in what some called a "chance encounter" —but which turned out to be an excellent photo-op situation for Chen.⁵⁸ It was given broad favorable coverage in Taiwan. As a result, in November, the green team took a lead in the polls for the first time. President Chen was favored by 45 percent versus 44 percent for the Lien-Soong team.⁵⁹ Inciting local Taiwanese nationalism and playing the role of statesman both seemed to work for the president.

Some political pros at the time also said the blue team had showed itself to be over-confident, causing their drop in the polls.⁶⁰ Others opined that negative campaigning by the green team accounted for a measurable shift in views of the electorate. A DPP commercial showing a "communist" Chinese flag together with a scene of Taipei Mayor MA Ying-jeou attending a flag-raising ceremony and a "Special Report" about James Soong noting he hailed from Hunan Province in China, the same place where Mao was born, while speculating that he had liver cancer, may also have helped.⁶¹

Smelling blood, President Chen kept on the offensive. Chen asserted that two-thirds of the Constitution did not fit the times and that it could not be fixed; it had to be rewritten. Chen proposed that the content of a new constitution be decided by referendum in 2006 and that it be put into effect in 2008.⁶² Shortly thereafter the blue team vetted its own proposal for constitutional change. Pan-blue

56. Susan V. Lawrence, "United States and Taiwan: Diplomatic but Triumphant Progress," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, November 13, 2003 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/News/2003/FEER-131103.htm>>).

57. Cris Cockel, "Chen's New York Transit Gets High Marks," *China Post*, November 5, 2003, p. 1.

58. "Chen, Powell Exchange Pleasantries," *China Post*, November 5, 2003, p. 1.

59. According to a poll done by the Chinese newspaper *China Times*, 35 percent of those polled favored Chen and 34 percent favored Lien. See "Chen Takes Lead in Taiwan Presidential Candidates Opinion Poll," Agence France Presse, November 7, 2003 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/AFP/2003/AFP-071103.htm>>).

60. Amber Wang, "Opposition and Ruling Camps Neck-in-neck Leading to Election," *China Post*, November 7, 2003, p. 4. The poll showed Chen to have a 10-percent lead in the south and the opposition to have a 10-percent lead in the north.

61. "Negative Campaign Practices May Hinder Fair Competition," *China Post*, November 7, 2002, p. 2. The DPP denied any connection to the second charge.

62. CHANG Yun-ping, "Chen Drafts Timetable on Constitution," *Taipei Times*, November 12, 2003 (available online at <<http://www.taipetimes.com>>).

pushed constitutional amendments as opposed to writing a new constitution.⁶³ Their proposals were designed not only to dampen tension with China but also to appeal to public sympathy. Their agenda included: asserting the Republic of China's sovereignty, putting a referendum law in the Constitution, revising the legislative election process and requiring that the president win an absolute majority, reserving thirty percent of vacant public posts for females, lowering the legal voting age to eighteen, making military service voluntary, and allowing voting in absentia.⁶⁴

At this juncture, Lien and Soong stepped up their offensive against Chen. Lien said the election year would be critical and Taiwan would have to choose between economic prosperity and conflict with China. He said that in the "first phase" of a war with China Taiwan would suffer 120,000 casualties, citing a Chen administration defense official. He further asserted that all men under the age of 40 would have to be drafted.⁶⁵ Lien also suggested an earlier deadline for constitutional revisions than Chen had called for: 2005. Lien apparently expected the U.S. to act against Chen and calculated that by forcing Chen to go too far on the independence issue, which the constitutional issue would do, he would hurt Chen's re-election bid. In any case, it worked, and Lien's popularity ratings were soon back above Chen's.⁶⁶

Pan-blue went even further in suggesting reform. In late November they proposed their own referendum bill, a much different one from Chen's, in the legislature. President Chen opposed it, and the Cabinet vetoed it. But it survived and became law. The blue bloc's bill made it very difficult to use a referendum to change the country's name, flag, or the definition of its territory. A referendum on changing the Constitution would have to be initiated by three-fourths of the legislature and approved by half of eligible voters (not just half of those who turned out to vote).⁶⁷ President Chen

63. Jason Dean, "Chen Counts on a New Constitution," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, December 4, 2003, pp. 14-16.

64. "Lien Trumpets KMT Constitutional Plan," *Taipei Times*, November 16, 2003 (available online at <<http://www.taipetimes.com>>).

65. "Lien Touts KMT Platform as Key to Cross-Strait Peace," *Taiwan News*, November 9, 2003 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org.TN/2003/TN-091103.htm>>).

66. See Lawrence Chung, "Lien Chan Does U-Turn to Back New Charter," *Straits Times*, November 21, 2003 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/ST/2003/St-211103-1.htm>>).

67. Philip P. Pan, "Taiwan Vote Met with Caution," *Washington Post*, November 29, 2003, p. A10.

was furious, but instead of fighting it he decided to use a provision in the law (Article 17), to his advantage. This provision allows the president to call for a referendum if the nation's security is threatened, which he said it was, pointing to five hundred Chinese missiles across the Taiwan Strait aimed at Taiwan.⁶⁸ The blue bloc claimed this was an illegal use of the referendum (since there was no immediate threat), but Chen went ahead anyway. Beijing in the meantime sounded its disapproval loudly and threatened to take action against Taiwan.⁶⁹

President Chen, under pressure from the Bush administration, forthwith promised the United States that he would not hold a referendum on independence.⁷⁰ Department of State spokesperson Richard Boucher declared the next day that the U.S. opposed any attempt "by either side to change. . .the status quo."⁷¹ Chen then proposed what he called "defensive referendums" or a vote on China's "one country, two systems" formula for unification and a demand that China remove its missiles aimed at Taiwan. Both were considered confrontational. The U.S. reaction came in the form of a statement by President Bush when Chinese Premier WEN Jiabao visited Washington. Bush said: "We oppose any unilateral decision. . .to change the status quo. And the comments and actions by the leader of Taiwan indicate he may be willing to make decisions to change the status quo. And we oppose that."⁷²

On January 16, following President Bush's "reprimand," President Chen altered the wording of the referendums to ask voters if Taiwan should purchase defensive missiles in response to China's missile buildup and if Taipei should try to negotiate an easing of tensions with China. Both seemed aimed at placating the U.S. and

68. "Taiwan's Chen Promises to Hold 'Security' Referendum on Election Day," Agence France Presse, November 29, 2003 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/AFP/2003?AFP-291103.htm>>).

69. Chinese leaders called it "an extremely dangerous provocation." See "China Says to Deal with Taiwan Issue 'At Any Cost,'" *Reuters*, December 6, 2003 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/Reu/2003/Reuters-061203.htm>>).

70. "Taiwan's Chen Says Referendum to Protect Status Quo," *Reuters*, December 5, 2003 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/Reu/2003/Reuters-051203.htm>>). It was reported that the U.S. dispatched James Moriarty to Taipei to discuss the matter, but Taiwan's presidential office denied this.

71. "Taiwan Not to Hold Referendum on Sovereignty Change," Central News Agency, December 4, 2003 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/CHA/2003/CNA-041203-hm>>).

72. Susan V. Lawrence and Jason Dean, "Boiling Point: Will Taiwan Push China Too Far," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, December 18, 2003 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/News/2003/FEER-121203.htm>>).

convincing Washington to support Taiwan's "democratic procedure." The former was intended to minimize Washington's concern that Taiwan was not spending enough on defense; the latter was in line with U.S. policy about a peaceful settlement only of the Taiwan issue while making it appear that Taipei was not trying to provoke China. Forthwith Secretary of State Powell said that he thought President Chen had "shown a little flexibility in the way those two questions have been worked."⁷³ But few other countries were pleased with Chen's referendums and positive responses were not heard.⁷⁴ President Chen subsequently described the referendums as preventing war in the Taiwan Strait and as historic in terms of Taiwan's democratization, comparing them to the end of martial law in 1987, plenary elections in 1991 and 1992, the first direct presidential election in 1996, and a rotation of ruling parties in 2000.⁷⁵ Lien said he would try to "put aside" cross-strait disputes and focus on a "Taiwan first" course. Soong followed up on the economic theme saying that 70,000 grade school students cannot afford lunch, and half of Taiwan's college graduates cannot find jobs.⁷⁶

CANDIDATES AND THEIR PLATFORMS

This was the first direct presidential election in Taiwan with only two candidates each for president and vice president.⁷⁷ In other words, it was a two-party (actually two blocs) election, with the DPP and the TSU on the left, or constituting the green bloc, versus the KMT, PFP, and New Party (NP) in the Pan-blue group.⁷⁸ Incumbents President CHEN Shui-bian and Vice President An-

73. David Lange, "Cross-Strait Tensions," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, January 29, 2004, p. 24.

74. Leslie Fong, "Taiwan Will Sing This Tune Alone," *Straits Times*, January 22, 2004

75. "Peace Framework Needed to Prevent Straits War: Chen Says," *China Post*, January 23, 2004

76. *Ibid.*

77. This was basically true, although the Alliance of Fairness and Justice (called pan-purple) ran "virtual candidates" (LIN Hsiu-mei for president and CHANG Chih-chin for vice president), and the Alliance of One Million Invalid Ballots participated in the campaign. The former pushed a social welfare agenda; the latter condemned dirty politics and asked voters to cast protest ballots. Both were highly critical of the major candidates, calling both Chen and Lien "rotten apples." See Lawrence Chung, "The Many Hues of Taiwan's Politics," *Straits Times*, March 12, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/ST/2004/St-120304-htm>>).

78. The TSU supported Chen and Lu but did not sponsor a candidate. The NP supported Lien and Soong but did not enter a candidate. This was the plan for both early on.

nette Lu formally represented the Democratic Progressive Party's ticket and also the green bloc as a whole. LIEN Chan, chairman of the Nationalist Party, and James Soong, head of the People First Party, as noted earlier formed a joint party ticket.⁷⁹ This simplified the campaign. Since the personalities and issues on the two sides were very different in a host of ways, it also made the choices for voters easier.

A brief rundown on the candidates, issues, and strategies will help one understand the nature of the campaign as well as the results of the voting.⁸⁰ It may also shed some light on the aftermath of the election.

CHEN Shui-bian was born in southern Taiwan in 1951 of a poor family. He excelled in school during his youth and later attended Taiwan's premier institution of higher education, National Taiwan University, to enroll in law school and in 1974 graduated at the top of his class. Before the age of 30, Chen was a well-known lawyer in Taiwan — having defended dissidents who were arrested following the Kaohsiung Incident in 1979. Annette Lu was among them. Chen was later convicted of libel in a suit involving a then well-known conservative politician.⁸¹ He served eight months in jail, burnishing his credentials as an activist opposition politician.

Chen joined the Democratic Progressive Party at its founding in 1986 and immediately became a prominent party member. From 1981 to 1985 he served on the Taipei City Council, though as an independent. In 1989, Chen was elected to the Legislative Yuan representing the DPP and there built a reputation for being both an effective and aggressive lawmaker. In 1994, he gained national acclaim when he was elected mayor of Taipei, the country's capital and largest city. Meanwhile, in 1987, Chen won membership to the

79. The TSU and the NP were not represented on the green and blue tickets, but it is clear that they supported their respective sides.

80. For information on the candidates, see John F. Copper, *Historical Dictionary of Taiwan (Republic of China)* Second Edition, Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2000; for brief entries on the candidates and parties, also see *Who's Who in the Republic of China — Taiwan*, Taipei: Government Information Office, 2001, and *Curricula Vitae on the Candidates for the Eleventh-term President and Vice President*, Taipei: Government Information Office, 2004. For further details on the candidates and their party's platforms, see their various websites.

81. Interestingly it was Elmer Fung, who was a candidate for vice president representing the New Party that brought charges against Chen and caused him to go to jail.

Central Standing Committee and Central Executive Committee of the DPP.⁸²

When he was elected to the office of Taipei mayor, many observers questioned the genuineness of Chen's victory. It was thought that the Nationalist Party, viewing its candidate HUANG Ta-chou, as likely to lose to JAW Shao-kang, who represented the New Party, threw the election to Chen. (The NP had just recently formed from dissident Nationalist Party members who were unhappy with President LEE Teng-hui's leadership of the party; thus, top KMT leaders, including President Lee, sought to destroy the "renegade" party.⁸³) In any event, Chen won and was, by almost all accounts, an effective mayor.

Notwithstanding his credible performance while maintaining high popularity ratings as mayor, in 1998 Chen lost in a reelection bid to former Minister of Justice MA Ying-jeou running on the Nationalist Party ticket. Chen was bitter over the defeat, even though it turned out to be a blessing in disguise because it freed him from a promise he made not to run for the presidency in 2000 if he were reelected Taipei mayor.⁸⁴ In 2000, Chen was elected Taiwan's fifth president via the country's second direct presidential election. Some said history repeated itself, referring to Chen's mayoral win in 1994 with help from the KMT, except that Chen did not perform so well in office this time. While president, as noted above, Chen faced many difficulties and his tenure was plagued by political gridlock, economic recession and other problems that were accompanied by his decline in popularity.

Annette Lu was born in Taiwan in 1944 and grew up on the island. In 1967, she received an LL.B. degree from National Taiwan University. She later went to the United States where she obtained a Master of Comparative Law degree from the University of Illinois and an LL.M. degree from Harvard University, in 1971 and 1978 respectively.

In December 1979, shortly after she returned from the United States, Lu joined an anti-government protest march and rally in the southern city of Kaohsiung that resulted in violence, known, as

82. For details on Chen's ties with the DPP and some further information on his political career, see Shelly Rigger, *From Opposition to Power: Taiwan's Democratic Progressive Party*, Boulder: Lynn Rienner, 2001.

83. For details, see Copper, *Taiwan's Mid-1990s Elections*, p. 50.

84. Chen reveals this in his own book. See CHEN Shui-bian, *The Son of Taiwan: The Life of Chen Shui-bian and His Dreams for Taiwan* (translated by David J. Toman), Taipei: Taiwan Publishing Company, 2000.

mentioned above, as the “Kaohsiung Incident.” She was sentenced to 12 years in prison for her role in the affair, of which she served five. Lu thus earned her credentials as an adamant supporter of democracy and of Taiwan’s independence and as a foe of Nationalist Party rule.⁸⁵

In 1992, Lu was elected to a seat in the Legislative Yuan representing the DPP. She also served as a senior advisor to President LEE Teng-hui while retaining her membership and ties to the DPP. In 1997, she was elected magistrate of Taoyuan County on the DPP ticket, which provided an important boost to her political career.⁸⁶ Meanwhile, Lu had become known as a strong advocate of Taiwan’s independence and was reputed to be the nation’s leading supporter of feminism. In fact, she was often called and referred to herself as the founder of the feminist movement in Taiwan. In 2000, Lu was elected vice president, the first woman to hold that office.

LIEN Chan was born in China in 1936. His father was from Taiwan, his mother from China. Lien grew up in Taiwan and received his BA degree from National Taiwan University. He then went to the United States where he obtained an MA degree in International Law and Diplomacy and a Ph.D. in political science, both from the University of Chicago.⁸⁷

Of all of the candidates, Lien’s experience in government was the most extensive. Shortly after he returned from the U.S. he was appointed ROC’s ambassador to El Salvador. In 1976, Lien became director of Youth Affairs in the Nationalist Party, and in 1978 Deputy Secretary-General of the Central Committee of the Party and head of the National Youth Commission (of the government). In 1981, he was promoted to the job of Minister of Transportation and Communication — at 45, the youngest person ever to serve as a minister. In 1987, Lien was elevated to the position of Vice Premier and in 1988 became Minister of Foreign Affairs. From 1990 to 1993 he served as governor of Taiwan. In 1993, he was chosen a vice-chairman of the Nationalist Party and Premier. In 1996, Lien was elected the country’s vice president (on the ticket with LEE Teng-

85. For further information on Lu’s political career, see Rigger, *From Opposition to Power*.

86. Lu’s win in this election was especially important because it was a major setback for the KMT. See Yun-han CHU, “The Challenges of Democratic Consolidation,” in Steve Tsang and Hung-mao TIEN (eds.), *Democratization in Taiwan: Implications for China*, London: Macmillan Press, Ltd, 1999, p. 161.

87. A book about Lien and the KMT was published during the campaign: LEE Chien-ying, *Lan-tien Tsai-hsien* (Blue Skies Appear Again), Taipei: Bookzone, 2004.

hui) in Taiwan's first direct presidential and vice presidential election. In 2000, he ran for president representing the Nationalist Party, and after the election Lien became the Party's chairman when former president LEE Teng-hui was forced to step down.

James Soong (or SOONG Chu-yu) was born in China in 1942. He moved to Taiwan with his family in 1949 and grew up on the island. He received an LL.B. degree from National Chengchi University in Taiwan in 1964. Soong went to the U.S. for further study, obtaining an MA degree in political science from the University of California at Berkeley and a Ph.D., also in political science, from Georgetown University.⁸⁸

In 1974, Soong returned to Taiwan to serve as the personal secretary to the premier and subsequently Deputy Minister of the Government Information Office (GIO). He then became personal secretary to the President, Minister of GIO, and Director of Cultural Affairs of the Nationalist Party. In 1984, he was picked to be the Deputy Director of the Central Committee of the Party. The next year, Soong was chosen to be a member of the Central Committee and the following year, Secretary General of the Party. In 1993, he was appointed governor of Taiwan and the following year was elected to that position, becoming Taiwan's first ever elected governor.⁸⁹ In 2000, Soong became chairman of the People First Party, which he founded.

In December 2003, as noted above, Lien and Soong got together and decided to form an alliance of their two parties and run on a single ticket. Lien ran as the Pan-blue's presidential candidate and Soong the vice presidential candidate. The advantage in this arrangement was that together they might defeat CHEN Shui-bian; otherwise it looked as if there would be little chance for either, running separately, to win. Before this many observers had thought that a joint ticket would not be possible because of the bad blood between the two after the 2000 election. Others opined that the Nationalist Party's hostility toward Soong and the efforts to derail Soong's candidacy came from LEE Teng-hui and not Lien.⁹⁰ Some said that in 2000 Lien had wanted to work out a deal with Soong

88. There is no biography or autobiography on Soong. According to his advisors, he has discouraged such books. For details on his political career that relate to this election, see Chong-Hai SHAW, "Taiwan's Presidential Election: Still Hope for James Soong?" *Asian American Review*, Volume 11, No. 1 (Spring 2003), pp. 85-108.

89. For details, see Copper, *Taiwan's Mid-1990s Elections*, chapter 2.

90. For a discussion on these matters, see Larry Diamond, "Anatomy of an Electoral Earthquake: How the KMT Lost and the DPP Won the 2000 Presidential Election,"

whereby Soong would be on the ticket with him, but Lee nixed the proposal. Further complicating the arrangement, the Lien-Soong alliance gave rise to rumors to the effect that Lien agreed to give Soong a special role in the new administration based on his popularity, ability to attract votes, and leadership talent. It was even said that Lien promised not to seek a second term thus leaving Soong with a good opportunity to run for president, assuming the blue team won the election and performed well in office.⁹¹

Green team leaders also encountered centrifugal forces in their camp. The relationship between President Chen and Vice President Lu became strained soon after their winning the 2000 election. The vice president perceived her role in the new administration to be an important one, but President Chen, or at least his close advisors, did not see it that way. Lu was thus unhappy about being marginalized from the decision making center. As a result, Lu said early on that she would not be on the ticket again.⁹² The rift between Chen and Lu later widened after a local magazine reported that Chen had had a sexual affair with his interpreter Bikkim Hsiao and that information about the matter had come from Vice President Lu. Lu sued the paper and won, but not before the affair had embarrassed the Chen administration and caused many of Chen's top advisors to come to dislike and distrust Lu.⁹³

In fact, as the campaign period approached, a group of DPP legislators advised President Chen to find another candidate for the 2004 election. Many DPP stalwarts said that they could not work with Lu. Furthermore, opinion polls showed that Chen would do better in the election with someone else on the ticket.⁹⁴ Chen, however, apparently decided that he needed Lu to sustain his independence image and to keep his voting base, and that dumping her

in Muthiah Alagappa (ed.), *Taiwan's Presidential Politics: Democratization and Cross-Strait Relations in the Twenty-first Century*, Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2001, pp. 56-59.

91. See CHIN Heng-wei, "Lien and Soong Back to Square One," *Taipei Times*, April 11, 2003, p. 8.

92. See "Taiwanese Vice-President Denies Rumors about 'Teaming-Up' for Election," *Financial Times Information*, August 22, 2002 (available online at <<http://www.lexis-nexis.com>>).

93. See "Vice President's Libel Suit Selected Top Judicial News Event," Central News Agency, December 31, 2002 (available online at <<http://www.lexis-nexis.com>>).

94. According to polls conducted by the *United Daily News*, TVBC, and the DPP in September 2003, if he were to choose Taipei County magistrate SU Chen-chang, Chen would be more likely to win than with Lu. See "Taiwan President Chen Lags Opposition Leader in Public Support," Agence France Presse, September 21, 2003.

would hurt rather than help his election chances. So he asked her to run with him again, and she agreed.

The central tenets of the DPP's strategy to win the election were: play up the issue of Taiwan's national identity (or Taiwanese nationalism), discredit the blue team in the minds of voters for its past authoritarianism and oppression, and paint the blue parties as perpetrators of obstructionism after CHEN Shui-bian won the election in 2000. The ruling party also made light of the fact Pan-blue was comprised of parties and candidates that had been highly critical of each other in 2000 and would not be able to work as an effective coalition if elected. In addition, Green bloc spokespersons pressed the view that a Chen/Lu victory would advance (or consolidate) Taiwan's democracy and prevent Taiwan from being absorbed by China (and thus suffer Hong Kong's fate).⁹⁵

Capitalizing on the national identity issue meant promoting localism, exploiting ethnic enmity, and trying to provoke tension with China (while persuading voters that the United States would protect Taiwan in the event its provocations caused China to threaten to use force against Taiwan or carry out such threats). This was divisive and some said constituted low politics. Others proclaimed it was dangerous and that it could not only provoke a conflict with China, but also risked U.S. support of Taiwan. Most pundits thought exploiting local nationalist sentiments was a difficult balancing act, though Chen and the DPP had done it successfully before. Some wondered if Chen could win if he simply adopted the same tactics used in the 2000 and 2001 campaigns.⁹⁶

Chen and his party strategists made hay of the KMT's past dictatorial rule, its "oppression" of the people (especially the Taiwanese), and ruling party corruption to portray the blue team as bad for Taiwan. Thus the DPP focused on the negative side of Taiwan's past politics. They regularly spoke of authoritarianism, bad human rights practices, and lack of civil and political rights under KMT rule. Applying this to the present, the green bloc sought to convince voters that the political gridlock in Taiwan after Chen became president in 2000 was primarily the fault of the blue parties. They labeled Lien and Soong as obstructionists and said they opposed democracy, political reform, and other forms of progress. Finally, the green team spoke of Lien and Soong as pro-China,

95. The ruling party's campaign platform was available online at <<http://www.dpp.org.tw>> and could be found in its campaign literature.

96. See sources in footnote 1 for sources on previous elections.

sometimes using the terms disloyal (or having an allegiance to Beijing), and not loving Taiwan, nor thinking of it as home or as a sovereign nation-state.⁹⁷

Green election planners characterized President Chen as a champion of democracy, contending that Taiwan's democratization had been "consolidated" as a result of the 2000 election.⁹⁸ They characterized the referendums as democratic, and playing an important role in the further democratization of Taiwan. They said that China had to accept them, and would. They depicted Chen as a "local boy," a man of the people, and someone who truly loved Taiwan.

Lien and Soong sought to build a winning strategy by headlining the economy while convincing voters that Chen had grossly mismanaged the country in this area and that only the blue bloc could bring back economic growth and stability to Taiwan.⁹⁹ The blue bloc campaigners reminded the populace often of what it had accomplished in the past in engineering phenomenal economic growth. They referred often to their Taiwan "economic miracle," which, they said, Chen had ruined. Pan blue strategists tried to persuade voters that Chen and the DPP were incompetent across the board and had not provided leadership to Taiwan over the past four years. These were central tenets of the Pan-blue legislative election campaign strategy in 2001. But, the blue bloc also sought to paint the DPP and Chen as a dictator (promoting "green terror") and corrupt and thus as hypocritical for tagging the KMT with these labels.¹⁰⁰

The blue bloc portrayed their candidates as superior in education (both with PhDs from outstanding American universities) and

97. For an assessment of this claim and Pan-blue's reaction, see "DPP Shouldn't Fan Disputes: Lawmaker," *China Post*, April 17, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.lexis-nexis.com>>).

98. This point is discussed in depth in John F. Copper, *Consolidating Democracy in Taiwan*, Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2004.

99. "Economy Only Way to Protect Taiwan: Lien," *China Post*, February 29, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.lexis-nexis.com>>).

100. Some Pan-blue supporters argued that democracy in Taiwan devolved under LEE Teng-hui during the last half of his tenure as president. See Ramon H. Myers, Linda Chao, and Tai-chun KUO, "Consolidating Democracy in the Republic of China on Taiwan, 1996-2000," in Bruce J. Dickson and Chien-min CHAO (eds.), *Assessing the Lee Teng-hui Legacy in Taiwan Politics: Democratic Consolidation and External Relations*, Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2002, pp. 73-90. Chen, they say, copied Lee's political style and authoritarian views and learned it from their close association. Others say it was Chen's nature and part of his ethnic group's view, acquired from Japanese culture.

experience. Thus Lien and Soong, Pan-blue spokespersons said, would afford the country good government — in the best Chinese tradition. They in turn spoke of the green bloc (though not its candidates) as lacking in education, being provincial, not knowing much about the world, suffering from narrow-minded views, and acting like they were still in opposition. Pan-blue spokespersons claimed that their candidates could bring social stability to Taiwan (which it has not had since 2000) and would control crime (which many in the green camp, being criminals themselves in the past, would not do, they said). Specifically, they advocated harsher punishments for convicted criminals, including the death penalty (which Pan-green had often advocated ending). Pan-blue campaign officials promoted the theme of a multi-ethnic society, condemning the green team's playing the ethnic card and its promoting ethnic divisiveness and ethnic hatred. They spoke of "another change in ruling parties" facilitating the democratization process.¹⁰¹

Meanwhile, Lien and Soong acquiesced to the notion of Taiwan having a separate (from China) national identity while abandoning their former advocacy of Taiwan's reunification with China, at least in the foreseeable future, and the "1992 consensus" on one China (both of which had given the green bloc the opportunity to label them as not loving Taiwan).¹⁰²

The green team seemed to have an advantage on the following issues: Taiwan's national identity, cross-strait relations (at least in the sense that both the DPP and TSU generally with success portrayed China in a bad light and this attracted votes, though it risked straining relations with the U.S. and China), and Taiwan's democratization. The blue bloc seemed to have the edge in the areas of overseeing economic growth and social stability, promoting good ethnic relations, and advancing more effective governance.¹⁰³ The issue of corruption, which had been a good green issue, seemed in-

101. See "Dueling Campaign Strategies," *China Post*, March 15, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.lexis-nexis.com>>).

102. According to the "1992 consensus," Beijing and Taipei would agree to the idea of one China, but they would each have their own definition of what "China" meant. This led to the first official talks between two sides, the Koo-Wang (or Wang-Koo in China) held in April 1993 in Singapore. President Chen later rejected the idea that there was a consensus. In any event, the issue helped the DPP, and the blue team dropped it as a campaign issue while playing down reunification in the foreseeable future.

103. It should be noted that the KMT is Taiwan's only "multi-ethnic party." Mainland Chinese mostly support the PFP, although Soong had broad support from Taiwanese when he was governor of Taiwan and he has continued to be seen in a gener-

stead to help Pan-blue, at least late in the campaign. The emotional issues favored the green side more; intellectual debates were on the blue side.¹⁰⁴

The green bloc's advantage on the national identity issue came from the fact that its voter base was overwhelmingly Fukien Taiwanese. In addition, the DPP had long advanced the cause of a separate Taiwanese identity and local nationalism, and President Chen had so acted as president — promoting local history, culture, etc. Mirroring the DPP edge, a public opinion poll taken shortly before the election that recorded only 10 percent of the populace saying they were “Chinese” as opposed to 26 percent in 1992.¹⁰⁵ Lien, who is also Taiwanese (because his father is), adopted the slogan “Taiwan first” during the campaign and played down ties with China other than economic ones; but, with numerous Mainland Chinese serving as advisors and his partnership with Soong, many perceived his efforts as less than convincing.¹⁰⁶ However, the SARS crisis and Beijing blocking Taiwan's contacts with and efforts to participate in the World Health Organization, as well as China's threatening military buildup across the strait, were on the minds of voters. This helped Pan-green promote local nationalism. A poll taken during the run-up to the election showed only 7 percent of the population found China's model for reunification (the one country, two systems proposal) acceptable; 71 percent said it was unsuitable.¹⁰⁷

The issue of democratization favored the green side, though less clearly so. The DPP had long propounded the idea that Taiwan's democratization began in the mid-1980s after the DPP was founded.¹⁰⁸ Party leaders even convinced many voters that democracy required party competition, which only they could provide and that a rotation of ruling parties was beneficial. This, they said, they had accomplished this in 2000 — thus “consolidating” Taiwan's democracy. Following this line of thinking, President Chen declared

ally favorably light by Taiwanese. Also Soong has a lot of support from Hakka voters. The DPP and the TSU are essentially Fukien Taiwanese parties.

104. See “Key Issues for Taiwan's Election Campaign,” Agence France Presse, March 19, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/AFP/2004/AFP190304-htm>>).

105. Cited in Andrew Perrin, “What Taiwan Wants,” *Time*, March 8, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/News/2004/TIME-080304-htm>>).

106. *Ibid.*

107. The Mainland Affairs Council did this survey in November. It is cited in *ibid.*

108. See, for example, Hung-moa TIEN, *The Great Transition: Political and Social Change in the Republic of China*, Stanford: Hoover Institution Press, 1989, pp. 98-104.

during the campaign that he needed to be given another term to complete the consolidation process or prevent it from being set back. The DPP's "ownership" of this issue was somewhat tenuous, however, due to accusations of Chen being autocratic and DPP partisanship over the preceding four years.

President Chen linked the issue of holding referendums to the process of democratization. He convinced many that they were an "instrument of democracy" and that they would facilitate sorely needed reform of the political system, which had been impeded by gridlock inspired by the blue parties. He also said he wanted to write a new Constitution for the same reason. And Chen tried reducing the size of the legislature, changing Taiwan's electoral system, and lowering the voting age to both the referendums and the constitutional issues, portraying all as "needed democratic reforms."

During the campaign, some observers said that the "referendum tactic" backfired. The blue team cast the referendums as "illegal" because President Chen did not follow the bill guidelines for calling referendums. Further, the blue candidates noted, loudly and often during the campaign, that the military had stated it would go ahead with preparations against China's missile buildup anyway. (Referendum one asked if Taiwan should take measures to defend against this.) And the head of the Mainland Affairs Council said publicly that efforts would be made to negotiate with China no matter how the referendum vote went. (Referendum two asked if Taipei should negotiate with China.) Thus opposition lawmakers asked: Are the referendums genuine? Blue team spokespersons also asserted that the referendums were not about issues that should be or are normally put to the people (as in Western democracies) and that the public could not in any event decide these matters (that the United States must decide whether to sell Taiwan defensive missiles and China had to agree to negotiate, which it would not do). Hence, the referendums were labeled spurious. Not long before the election, survey polls indicated the referendums might not pass.¹⁰⁹ Regarding the other reforms, blue team candidates supported them but pointed out that most DPP members of the Legislative Yuan did not want a reduction in their numbers and

109. See Sofia Wu, "Nearly 70% of Surveyed College Students Oppose '320' Referendum: Poll," Central News Agency, January 18, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.lexis-nexis.com>>).

that the DPP really did not favor a new electoral system as that would be advantageous to the KMT.¹¹⁰

If the green bloc had a definite advantage on the issue of Taiwan's national identity, the blue team had a similar edge on managing the economy. The Nationalist Party had a sterling reputation for engineering economic growth in the past. It could without much exaggeration take credit for engineering the Taiwan "economic miracle." Growth had declined in later years (before the KMT lost the 2000 election) but that was natural because of Taiwan graduating from the status of an underdeveloped country. Furthermore, under KMT rule Taiwan had avoided problems that other countries in Asia had experienced during the Asian "economic meltdown" (beginning in 1997 and continuing for a few years). Shortly after CHEN Shui-bian became president, Taiwan went into a deep and very painful recession. Thus it was fair to say that Taiwan's economic bad times had occurred on Chen's watch and was largely his fault.

President Chen and the DPP attributed the economic downturn to a global decline, especially in the area of information technology, and to the political gridlock in Taiwan perpetrated by Pan-blue. Although some believed this, especially Chen's supporters, this line of argument was not generally convincing. However, dampening the impact of Pan-blue's most salient campaign theme, the economy had picked up prior to the election and was doing moderately well at the time of voting.¹¹¹

The blue bloc's strategy may be summarized as capturing the votes that Lien and Soong won in 2000, which would allow them to defeat Chen easily. More specifically, their campaign efforts were aimed at certain groups, mirroring the main tenets of their campaign strategy. Pan-blue sought to win the votes of Taiwan's minority groups — Aborigines, Hakka and Mainland Chinese — who felt discriminated against under DPP rule. It was calculated that they might win 3.5 million votes from these groups. They also focused their campaign on the business vote. If Pan-blue could win over Fukien Taiwanese in business and keep other ethnic groups in busi-

110. Switching from the single vote, multi-member district system would provide an advantage to the KMT because of its good and deep organizational abilities.

111. In looking ahead, 61.8 percent of company leaders in Taiwan said that business prospects were better and 46 percent expected to spend more on advertising and marketing (compared to 39.6 percent that would spend the same). Costs and resource allocations were expected to go down. See "2004 Crystal-Gazing," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, December 25, 2003-January 1, 2004, p. 82.

ness on board, plus get the support of those doing business in China, they would have another big bloc of voters. Blue strategists also looked to owners of stocks, a large group of voters in Taiwan, as potential voters for Lien and Soong. The blue team was seen as pro-business, and it was widely assumed that their victory would be good for business and that the stock market would rally as a result. They sought to keep farmers and fishermen in their fold through long-established patron-client relations. Blue team campaign planners also perceived they could win over some of the youth vote from the DPP, especially males, by advocating an end to the military draft and by publicizing DPP corruption and "green" dictatorship. They also hoped to appeal to those that had expected the Chen administration to do more for them (the unemployed, welfare recipients and the elderly) and make some inroads into the DPP's "solid south."¹¹²

Central to the green team's campaign strategy was winning the hearts of voters on the issue of Taiwan's national identity. Campaign planners thus tried to appeal to anyone who supported Taiwan remaining separate from China, keeping its sovereignty, and being a special, unique place. Campaigners talked a lot about Taiwan's history, culture and its special place in the world, often portraying China as a threat and an enemy. They sought to gain by exploiting patriotism and creating an "enemy complex." They often cited Taiwan's democratic achievement as their accomplishment. The green camp planners meanwhile sought to win over some minority groups, especially Aborigines and Hakka. In addition, they talked about the vulnerability of businesses that go to China and of making Taiwan a hub for doing business in Asia, including China. Thus they sought also to create a pro-business image — though one very different from the blue's pro-business views.¹¹³

THE CAMPAIGN

The campaign officially began on February 21, a month before Election Day. On that date, the Central Election Commission (CEC) declared 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. as the legal time for campaigning. The ballot, the CEC announced, would list two sets of candidates and two referendum questions. The Central Election Commission

112. Laurence Eyton, "Taiwan: Pan-blue Gives Power to the People," *Asia Times*, March 3, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/NEWS/1004/AT-030304-htm>>).

113. *Ibid.*

also said that 16.4 million people were eligible to vote, about one million more than in 2000.¹¹⁴

A few days later the CEC rejected the Cabinet's proposal that the ballots for the presidential election and the referendums be collected together. The Commission believed this would cause confusion. Opposition critics, and apparently the CEC believed them, opined that Chen wanted the votes done together so that there would be sufficient turnout for the referendum; otherwise there would not be. A poll taken at the time indicated more people planned not to vote for the referendums than would vote for them (44 percent versus 42 percent).¹¹⁵ The issue of whether the presidential votes and referendum votes should be accorded a different status and whether votes for the president, if put in the referendum boxes should be invalidated, was finally decided in favor of invalidation.¹¹⁶

Pan-green argued that the increase in the number of missiles China placed across the Taiwan Strait endangered Taiwan; thus Taiwan needed to do something. President Chen wanted to put his policy before the people to decide. Opposition leaders asserted that this referendum was flawed because purchasing missiles was up to the U.S. (since Washington had to agree to sell them) and the voters did not understand and should not be asked to decide strategic issues. Defending the second referendum, TSAI Ying-wen, head of the Mainland Affairs Council, declared that Taiwan's negotiating position would be weakened if the electorate did not support the "peace and stability" framework for talks with China. Opposition lawmakers retorted that the referendum was patently unnecessary if the government were going to pursue negotiations anyway, as Tsai had earlier suggested.¹¹⁷ Both referendums to some degree lacked legitimacy, though most agreed they represented the spirit and functioning of democracy and thus approved in principle of holding them. If, as Pan-green had stated earlier, the referendums

114. "Election Campaign Kicks off Officially with 27 Days to Go," *Taipei Times*, February 22, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taipeitimes.com>>).

115. "Taiwan Separates Presidential Vote from Referendum," Reuters, February 27, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.com/Reu/2004/Reuters-270204.htm>>).

116. TSAI Ting-I, "Central Election Commission Decides to Disqualify Misplaced Ballots," *Taiwan Times*, March 15, 2004, p. 1.

117. Melody Chen, "MAC Chief Says 'No' in Referendum Will Cost the Nation Bargaining Power," *Taipei Times*, February 27, 2003 (available online at <<http://www.taipeitimes.com>>).

would help President Chen and Vice President Lu win the election, this did not seem to be the case now.

According to opinion polls taken at the time the campaign started, the blue bloc was leading by a small margin. Pundits supporting the DPP said this was not significant in view of the estimated three million new voters.¹¹⁸ In addition, they declared that as many as 20 percent of voters remained undecided.¹¹⁹ But, the polls did reflect Chen losing support from several well known figures in Taiwan. Nobel laureate LEE Yuan-tseh, whose support some said gave Chen the election victory in 2000, was unhappy with Chen. WANG Yung-ching, one of Taiwan's most important entrepreneurs and a big financial contributor to Chen, publicly criticized the Chen government's opposition to direct transportation links with China. LIN Huai-min, a leading cultural figure in Taiwan, was also displeased with Chen. The three even announced jointly their feelings in a front-page newspaper story in mid-January — seemingly making it difficult for Chen to divert attention away from Pan-blue's criticism that he had been a "failed president."¹²⁰

The first ever presidential debate in Taiwan was held February 14 and the second on February 21. During both, the candidates focused considerable attention on cross-strait relations. Chen accused Lien of flip flopping and of accepting China's help in the campaign; Lien accused Chen of making empty promises on the three links and of endangering Taiwan and alienating the U.S. and Japan by deliberately provoking China. The two also sparred on the economy, education, legal reform, and other issues. Chen hit Lien on corruption; Lien attacked Chen on unemployment.¹²¹ At times the debate got dirty. Lien spoke of the Chen administration as being pitifully incompetent, corrupt, and bigoted (promoting ethnic discrimination). Chen accused Lien of being evasive and asserted that

118. Lawrence Chung, "Countdown to Taiwan Polls," *Straits Times*, February 21, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/ST/2004/ST-210204.htm>>). The author cites a *China Times* poll of the previous day that gave Lien 42.7 percent of the vote and Chen 39.7 percent.

119. "Chen Win Likely to Spell More Paralysis, Uncertainty: Scholars," *China Post*, February 25, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/CP/2004/250204.htm>>).

120. See Frank Ching, "Setbacks Have Chen Scrambling for Win," *Japan Times*, February 2, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/News/2004/JT-020204.htm>>).

121. Stephan Grauwels, "Taiwan's Presidential Hopefuls Face Off," Associated Press, February 14, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.lexis-nexis.com>>).

Lien abused his wife.¹²² Observers said Chen was a better debater but that Lien was well prepared and appeared statesman-like. Scholars gave Chen the win by a small margin, but this was not enough to alter the blue team's lead in the polls. Further, the stock market responded in a positive way, suggesting Lien did well.¹²³ The second debate seemed for the most part a repeat of the first.

On February 28, the 57th anniversary of the 1947 (now commemorated officially as Peace Memorial Day in Taiwan) "insurrection" against the misrule of then governor CHEN Yi, to which Nationalist troops responded by killing tens of thousands of Taiwanese, the green bloc held a huge rally. The event, organized by former president LEE Teng-hui to support President CHEN Shui-bian and Vice President Annette Lu, was called the "2-2-8 Hand-in-Hand Rally." It attracted an estimated one and a half million people in what may have been the island's largest demonstration to date. More than 100,000 turned out in Taipei.¹²⁴

The DPP also labeled the rally a protest against Chinese missiles aimed at the island, and its organizers sought to garner support for Chen's referendums and stir up feelings of local nationalism.¹²⁵ Many of those attending carried flags or banners reading "Say yes to Taiwan" and "No Missiles." Participants chanted: "Love Peace. Oppose Missiles." At the climax of the rally, President Chen and former President Lee joined hands to complete an island-long human chain extending from north to south down Taiwan's west coast. President Chen declared late during the rally "We showed the world our determination to recognize Taiwan and to protect Taiwan."¹²⁶

122. "Chen, Lien Face Off in First Televised Presidential Debate," *Taipei Times*, February 15, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.com>>). At this time Soong said that debating Lu would be "a waste of time," since she was not a top decision maker in the Chen administration.

123. "DPP, KMT both Claim Victory in First Presidential Debate," *China Post*, February 15, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.lexis-nexis.com>>) and "Taiwan Investors Optimistic about Stock Market after Presidential Debate," BBC Monitoring International Reports, February 14, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.lexis-nexis.com>>).

124. LIN Fang-yan, "Millions Form Human Chain in Plea for Peace," *Taiwan Journal*, March 5, 2004, p. 1.

125. "Two Million Rally for Peace," *Taipei Times*, February 29, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taipeitimes.org>>). This paper reported that there might have been two million people in attendance. Other sources cited more than a million. The rally was modeled after a reported two million-person chain formed in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania in 1989 calling for the independence of these states from the Soviet Union.

126. "Human Chain Protest Spans Taiwan," Reuters, February 28, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/Reu/2004/Reuters-280204.htm>>).

It was a successful campaign event reflected by the fact that a poll taken by a major newspaper after the rally showed the green ticket now leading Lien and Soong, with 40 percent of potential voters favoring Chen and Lu as compared to 38 percent supporting the Lien/Soong team. However, the poll also showed Chen had not bolstered his support among voters; rather many supporters of the blue team shifted into the undecided category, which increased from 17 to 22 percent at this time.¹²⁷ An election specialist said it was now the task of the blue team to revive its support base, which had consistently been bigger than the green bloc's, and to win over some uncommitted voters.¹²⁸

After the 2-2-8 rally, several events and numerous accusations and antics that might have been expected to influence the voters, in fact, did not seem to have much impact, at that time at least. Debates were held on the referendums between Kaohsiung Mayor Frank Hsieh and dissident and former presidential candidate (representing the New Party) LI Ao. Li asked Hsieh provocatively whether "we should talk to China as the Republic of China or the Republic of Taiwan" and drew attention to the DPP's charter, which calls for a referendum on the issue of independence. Yet this was not discussed, Li charged. Hsieh ignored what Li said and urged Taiwan to stand united against China's missile buildup.¹²⁹ On the heels of this event, opposition stalwarts publicly accused the first lady of taking illegal campaign contributions from tycoon CHEN Yu-hao.¹³⁰ She denied the charges and filed a defamation suit in response.¹³¹ The next day President Chen cut the ribbon to mark the opening of a new international airport in Taichung while criticizing the opposition, in particular Mayor Jason Hu, for not attending.¹³² This was followed by accusations made by the head of the Taiwan Pineapple Corporation, who said that the KMT had

127. "Taiwan President Leads Presidential Race for First Time in 2004: Poll," Agence France Presse, March 6, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwans/ecurity.org/AFP/2004/AFP-060304-htm>>).

128. Emile Sheng of Soochow University made this observation. See *Ibid.*

129. Amber Wang, "First Televised Debates Held on Referendum," *China Post*, March 1, 2004, p. 1.

130. "President Denies Extra Campaign Donation Charges," *China Post*, March 2, 2004, p. 1.

131. "First Lady Sues Fugitive Tycoon for Defamation," *China Post*, March 5, 2004, p. 1.

132. "Chen opens 'one-day' Int'l airport," *China Post*, March 6, 2004, p. 1.

taken illegal donations from him.¹³³ Soon after this a legislative committee passed a motion that Legislative Yuan seats be cut to 113 (from the current 225), while Aborigines protested their treatment by the government.¹³⁴

On March 13, the blue team organized a massive rally to energize its supporters and win over new voters. Pan-blue leaders asked participants to make noise and at 3:20 p.m. (representing March 20 or Election Day) activities went into full swing. The turnout was very large, notwithstanding the fact the weather had turned colder and skies were overcast. The number signing up for the rally was 1.5 million. Observers said the turnout was much more than that — over two million; some even said more than three million.¹³⁵ It appeared measurably larger than that for the green team's February 28 rally.¹³⁶

The festivities began with presidential candidate LIEN Chan shooting a basketball or *tou lan*, a homophone for "vote blue." In his address at the rally Lien said that the huge audience attested to the fact people felt the Chen administration had been disappointing and that there needed to be "another transfer of power." He specifically charged that Chen had not managed the economy well and that had hurt many people. Lien noted the KMT had built a prosperous country and Taiwan had weathered the 1997 "Asia meltdown" (alluding to Chen's contention that the downturn in the global economy had hurt Taiwan's economy, not his lack of leadership or poor policies). Lien further declared that Chen had habitually "passed the buck" and that he promoted populist policies in order to mask his ineptitude. Lien also attacked the DPP for corruption, mentioning specifically the recent investment scandal sur-

133. "KMT Accepted Donations, Says Pineapple Chief," *China Post*, March 9, 2004, p. 1.

134. See "Seats to be Cut to 113," *China Post*, March 11, 2004, p. 1 and "Aborigines Detail Their Demands Ahead of Presidential Poll," *China Post*, March 12, 2004, p. 1.

135. Organizers put the number at two to three million. Alex Tsai, representing the blue bloc, said the number was more than three million. See HUANG Tai-lin, "Lien, Soong hold dramatic rally," *Taipei Times*, March 14, 2004, p. 1. This compares to the "official" number of one and one-half million (reported by a Government Information Organization publication) attending the 228 rally. Organizers of the 228 rally reported 1.2 million people signed up. See "Human Chain Protest Spans Taiwan," Reuters, February 28, 2004 (available online at taiwansecurity.org/Reu/2004/Reuters-280204-htm).

136. The two sides no doubt inflated the numbers of the participants in their respective rallies. But no newspaper report said the number attending the DPP's rally was larger and many said the Pan-blue rally had a larger turnout. People that the author talked to at this time confirmed this.

rounding CHEN Shui-bian's wife.¹³⁷ Finally, Lien affirmed he would not allow Taiwan to be "swallowed up, merged or united" with the People's Republic of China and pledged that he would not negotiate with China under military threat. With these assertions, Lien sought to refute the DPP's charges that he would sell out Taiwan. Some observers said at the time that Lien had wisely given up the policy of unification, which had little resonance with voters anymore.¹³⁸

Participants in the rally carried placards saying: "Replace CHEN Shui-bian" and "The President of Unemployment Must be Defeated." Many chanted, "Get rid of the President, Save Taiwan." Some posters compared Chen to Hitler and assailed his "policies of ethnic bigotry" and his fanning the flames of ethnic hostility to win the election. Toward the end of the rally the blue candidates and their wives prostrated themselves and kissed the ground in a gesture of their love for Taiwan and as an expression of their patriotism, but also to refute the green camp's trying to portray them as too close to China.¹³⁹

DPP and TSU leaders were shocked by the large turnout at this rally. They responded by calling the blue team's "histrionics" insincere. President Chen compared the Pan-blue leaders' "acts" to former German Chancellor Willy Brandt kissing the ground in Poland to repent for German crimes against that country under Nazism.¹⁴⁰ Pan-green leaders also cited factionalism in the blue bloc that would, they said, certainly manifest itself if the blue team won.¹⁴¹ President Chen even spoke of Lien quitting the political scene after his defeat in the election. Chen said his leaving as head of the KMT would be a "repeat of four years ago" when he took

137. See Crystal Hsu, "Massive crowds rally for Pan-blue," *Taiwan News*, March 14, 2004, p. 1.

138. Earlier Lien and the blue team had abandoned the idea of Taiwan reunifying with China and the so-called "1992 consensus" or the two sides, China and Taiwan, each interpreting as they wished the idea of "one China." The green block used both policies to label Lien and the Pan-blue unfaithful to Taiwan and hurt them among voters. The blue team's support of a local identity seemed official at this point.

139. HUANG Tai-lin, "Lien, Soong Hold Dramatic Rally," *Taipei Times*, March 14, 2004, p. 1.

140. LIN Chieh-yu, "Chen Sees Lien Quitting after Defeat," *Taipei Times*, March 15, 2004, p. 3.

141. WANG Chung-ming, "Pan-blue Genuflection Insincere, Says DPP," *Taiwan News*, March 15, 2004, p. 3.

over as former president LEE Teng-hui was forced to resign.¹⁴² Some observers at the time said Chen appeared to be desperate.

During the campaign both Pan-blue and Pan-green tried to play the "U.S. card" and the "China card" to their advantage. The United States and China each constituted a major factor in the campaign even though both studiously tried to avoid this.

Many in Taiwan said the U.S. had already influenced the vote in favor of Pan-green. In October, President Chen had traveled to the United States, a visit which helped his candidacy noticeably. That the Bush Administration was lenient in allowing Chen to stay in the U.S. for several days (visits by high ranking officials from Taiwan were to be for transit only) and to publicly receive an award at a time when Chen had already announced his referendum proposals gave the impression that Washington favored Chen winning the coming election. So did the fact that Director of the American Institute in Taiwan Theresa Shaheen, who escorted President Chen during his visit, declared in public that President Bush was Chen's "secret guardian angel."¹⁴³

However, offsetting this positive influence for Chen, President Bush, as noted earlier, scolded President Chen for wanting to change the status quo in the Taiwan Strait when China's Premier WEN Jiabao was in the United States on a formal state visit on December 9. Bush also reminded the Chinese premier that the U.S. espoused a one-China policy. A few weeks later, Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage questioned on the record the logic of the referendums.¹⁴⁴

Subsequently, though, and very close to voting time, Central Intelligence Director George Tenet expressed serious concern over China's military buildup and said the U.S. would keep a close watch for signs of military activity by Beijing in advance of the March election in Taiwan.¹⁴⁵ Meanwhile, the flagship of the U.S. Navy's

142. LIN Chieh-yu, "Chen Sees Lien Quitting after Defeat," *Taipei Times*, March 15, 2004, p. 3.

143. Susan Lawrence, "Headstrong Island," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, March 11, 2004, p. 30. One thing that makes the impression even stronger that the U.S. supported Chen was the fact that during his speech when he received a human rights award it was thought that media cameras were not to be allowed, but Taiwan's media was there and reported widely on the event back home.

144. Mark Magnier, "Armitage, after Meeting with Chinese Leaders, Questions the Logic of Taiwan's Referendum," *Los Angeles Times*, January 31, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.lexis-nexis.com>>).

145. See Charles Snyder, "US Keeps Eye on Beijing Ahead of Poll," *Taipei Times*, February 26, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taipeitimes.com>>).

Pacific Fleet visited Shanghai on what was said to be a visit that was “not connected to anything going on in the area.”¹⁴⁶ The green bloc, though, rejoiced at the news, stating that the United States was protecting Taiwan and suggested “anything goes” during the campaign. However, in late February, in what some said was a balancing act, Secretary of State Colin Powell told China’s foreign minister LI Zhaoxing that Washington’s position remained “firm and unchanged” regarding any effort by Taipei to change the status quo.¹⁴⁷ China seemed pleased by his remarks, as did the blue team in Taiwan.

Overall, the U.S. “factor” seemed to work in favor of the green bloc. With an election approaching in the U.S. and the American public liking Taiwan better than China, it was natural, some said, that America “tilted” toward Taiwan and that meant favoring the incumbents.¹⁴⁸ It also comported with what pundits saw as a very pro-Taiwan, and with it, a pro-Chen, policy on the part of the Bush administration up to that time. To some observers this view was confirmed when the House of Representatives passed a resolution backing Taiwan’s referendum and by 36 members signing an open letter in support of the referendums.¹⁴⁹ Some said it was even more apparent after presidential challenger John Kerry, taking a pro-China position, cited America’s one-China policy while opining the U.S. did not have an obligation to protect Taiwan.¹⁵⁰

The other big external factor relating to the election was China. The two political blocs in Taiwan took very different positions on Taiwan’s relations with China and sought to benefit (in very different ways) from statements and actions by China during the campaign. The blue team no longer advocated reunification,

146. See Christopher Bodeen, “U.S. Navy Pacific Ship Visits Shanghai,” Associated Press, February 24, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/AP/2004/AP-240204.htm>>).

147. “Powell Stresses U.S. Opposition to Taiwan Changing Status Quo,” Agence France Presse, February 24, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/AFP/2004/AFP-240204.htm>>).

148. See, for example, Roger Mitton, “US Walks a Fine Line on Taiwan Poll,” *Straits Times*, March 4, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/ST/2004/ST040304.htm>>).

149. The House resolution, however, did not appear to have sufficient votes to pass because of President Bush’s December comments. See Cris Cockel, “36 U.S. House Members Sign Referendum Letter,” *China Post*, March 20, 2004, p. 19.

150. See Richard Halloran, “China Trying to Twist US’ Arm over Taiwan,” *Straits Times*, February 26, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/ST/2004/ST-260204.htm>>).

since there was very little public support for that idea, and even agreed to adopt CHEN Shui-bian's position that there are two sovereign states on each side of the Taiwan Strait. Still, Pan-blue pushed the idea that Taiwan's future was linked to China's due to the rapid expansion of economic ties over the past decade and a half and China's impressive economic growth. They advocated maintaining the political status quo while suggesting that the relationship might someday be one of building a commonwealth or a Greater China bloc as opposed to Taiwan becoming independent.¹⁵¹ The green team advocated separation, though many of its proposals were veiled in order to avoid the appearance of wanting to provoke conflict in the Taiwan Strait.

Chinese leaders in Beijing clearly realized that taking an aggressive stance opposing Taiwan's independence or interfering in the election would be counterproductive. This had happened in 1996 when China conducted missile tests off Taiwan's coast and again in 2000 when China threatened Taiwan and warned voters not to vote for the "candidate of independence" (meaning CHEN Shui-bian). In both cases the actions helped the candidates China opposed: LEE Teng-hui and Chen. So Beijing adopted a restrained, "hands off" policy toward the election. In fact, this policy was formalized at the Chinese Communist Party's 16th Congress in 2002 and remained largely in effect to the day of the election. In January 2004, the magazine *Current Events* (a party magazine) carried an article saying that since Taiwan had not formally proclaimed independence no aggressive actions were warranted.¹⁵² At that time a poll by Horizon Research (in Beijing) was published showing 58 percent of the people did not believe military action was necessary and supported more economic ties with Taiwan, while only 15 percent called for immediate military action.¹⁵³ On February 11, a spokesperson for China's Taiwan Affairs Office said: "We won't get involved in Taiwan's elections."¹⁵⁴

151. LIEN Chan stated on the record that the issue of unification "cannot be answered at this time." See Andrew Perrin, "What Taiwan Wants," *Time* (Asia edition), March 15, 2004, p. 39. The polls at that time showed little support for China's "one country, two systems" formula for resolving the Taiwan issue: it was supported by 7 percent and opposed by 71 percent. This poll was cited in the same article at page 36.

152. Cited in Anthony Kuhn, "The View from Beijing: A Sliver of Hope Would be Welcome," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, March 4, 2004, p. 27.

153. *Ibid.*

154. *Ibid.*

On the other hand, China pressured and implored the United States to restrain Chen. As noted earlier, before China's Premier Wen visited the United States in December, he asked the United States to make a statement that would pacify forces in China angry over Taiwan's flirting with independence. President Bush did just that. Beijing also sought the support of other countries to put international pressure on Taiwan to restrain independence advocates. Chinese leaders, in particular, asked other countries to oppose the referendums and many complied.¹⁵⁵

Yet Beijing could not completely ignore Chen's provocations due to the Chinese military's hostile feelings toward Chen, the DPP's independence stance, and the potency of Chinese nationalism (that evoked emotional feelings and irredentism to the effect that Taiwan was territory belonging to China). As the campaign officially began, China announced it did not believe President Chen's pledge to promote peace if reelected. Rather Beijing took the position that Chen had engaged in "splittist" activities during the past four years and that he had been the cause of instability in the Taiwan Strait. Chinese officials also condemned Chen's plan to hold referendums with the election, saying they threatened the status quo that China equated with peace.¹⁵⁶ Beijing meanwhile pressed the argument that the U.S. sticking to its one-China policy and its opposing the referendums was essential to continuing good Sino-American relations. A Chinese spokesperson cited U.S. Ambassador to China, Clark Randt, as saying that a peaceful resolution of the Taiwan issue conformed to the interests of the United States and China.¹⁵⁷ Chinese officials also noted the large amount of U.S. investment in China as evidence of a pro-China view in Washington.¹⁵⁸

China tried to increase its credibility about not interfering with Taiwan's election by inviting U.S. warships to China's ports, both

155. This includes France, Germany, Japan and a number of other countries. The German government said publicly that Taiwan should not hold the referendums. French President Chirac spoke out strongly against the referendums, prompting a reaction from Taiwan to the effect that France was bribed with an arms deal with China. See "Taiwan President Criticizes France for Siding with China, opposing referendum," BBC, March 17, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.lexis-nexis.com>>).

156. See "China Dismisses Promise by Taiwan's Chen to Promote Peace if Re-elected," Agence France Presse, February 25, 2004 available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/AFP/2004/AFP-250204.htm>>).

157. "Taiwan Issue Core of Sino-US Ties," *People's Daily*, February 28, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/News/2004/PD-280204-h.htm>>).

158. *Ibid.*

Shanghai and Hong Kong, in advance of the election. This, according to analysts, was aimed at convincing both Taiwan and the U.S. that it would not take any military action against Taiwan during the campaign and that the U.S. bore responsibility for keeping Taiwan from provoking China.¹⁵⁹ At the same time, the government-connected Social Survey Institute of China published the results of a poll taken on Taiwan's referendum showing that more than 20 percent of China's citizens did not care and 5.6 percent expressed tolerance.¹⁶⁰ This indicated a very different, i.e. soft, position taken by the Chinese government toward the Taiwan issue, especially compared to that of four years earlier.

Still China proffered some subtle criticism of Chen and Pan-green. In the week just before the voting Premier Wen, at a rare news conference, quoted authors from Taiwan lamenting the possibility of the island moving toward separation. Wen also criticized the referendum saying that it "threatened stability in the Taiwan Strait" — the same thing that the U.S., the European Union, France, Japan, and some other countries had said.¹⁶¹

President Chen accused China during the campaign of "intervening" in the election. He cited China's accusing Taiwanese businessmen in China of spying and forcing them to publicly blame Chen for their plight. He criticized China for allowing Pan-blue officials to campaign in the Taiwan business community in China and condemned the Chinese-French joint military exercises conducted during the campaign as an effort to intimidate Taiwan.¹⁶² President Chen also cited a U.S. report mentioning that China's defense spending had recently doubled in order to prepare against separation moves by Taiwan.¹⁶³

If the U.S. "factor" probably helped the green bloc, China helped the blue team, or at least did not hurt Pan-blue candidates as it had before. How much each would influence voters, though, was difficult to say.

159. CHING Cheong, "War Unlikely to Follow Taiwan Polls," *Straits Times*, March 2, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/ST/2004/ST-020304-htm>>).

160. *Ibid.*

161. See "Devil May Care," *Economist*, March 20, 2004, p. 42.

162. See David G. Brown, "Election Drama and Implications," *Comparative Connections*, January-March 2004 (available online at <http://www.csis.org/pacfor/cc/0401Qchina_taiwan.html>).

163. See "Beijing Doubling Defense Spending: Pentagon," *Agence France Presse*, April 24, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/AFP/2004/AFP-240404.htm>>). Richard Lawless, undersecretary of defense, made these comments.

Another major factor that might have impacted the election was the economy. Pan-blue supporters had long criticized the DPP's incompetence in this realm and blamed the Chen administration for Taiwan's 2001 recession (negative growth of almost two percent), anemic economic growth after that, and record (in recent times at least) unemployment. The Chen administration blamed the opposition for obstructing his economic reform efforts and mentioned the worldwide recession that was especially acute in the area of information technology, which was a big part of Taiwan's exports. Pan-blue charges did not resonate well in the 2001 election campaign and were largely overshadowed by the green bloc playing the ethnic card. Pan-blue, however, did not give up. Rather it adopted the view that continued economic difficulties would have an impact eventually and in particular in the 2004 election.

In any event, in the months preceding this election the economy was improving, and the outlook for growth and employment looked good. Expansion of the gross national product in 2004 was projected to be five percent. The Chen administration claimed that it had drastically reduced the number of non-performing bank loans and had made the economy much more transparent. It also boasted of its "Challenge 2008" — a six year plan to spend NT\$500 million on ten new construction projects to make Taiwan a center for design, product development and high value added construction, manufacturing, and logistics.¹⁶⁴

This seemed to take away a good issue from the blue candidates. Still the blue team boasted it could do better and pointed out that all or nearly all of Taiwan's recent economic growth came from participation in the China market, which Chen put at risk with his anti-China rhetoric and his calls for independence.¹⁶⁵ The blue team pledged that, if elected, it would engineer growth that resembled the past when the KMT was in power and "fix" the stock market.

During the last days of the campaign the blue and green teams grabbed at issues to improve their appeal to voters or to do damage to the other side. Going down the stretch, any issue seemed to be fair game for one side or the other, and small issues became big ones.

One event that seemed to considerably impact public opinion at this time was a television press conference in Los Angeles called

164. See "Taiwan Economy Does Need 'Blues,'" *Taiwan News*, March 18, 2004, p. 9.

165. See Joyce Huang and Michael Schuman, "China's Economic Embrace," *Time* (Asia edition), March 15, 2004, p. 39.

by Tuntex tycoon CHEN Yu-hao. Chen presented written documentation of donations to the DPP of over NT\$20 million, only part having been reported and some apparently laundered. Most damaging of CHEN Yu-hao's accusations was his claim to have gone to President CHEN Shui-bian's home where he gave money to the First Lady WU Shu-chen.¹⁶⁶ CHEN Yu-hao named well-known DPP legislator SHEN Fu-hsiung as a witness, among other top officials. Since the First Lady had already been accused of improper stock speculation that reaped large profits, she had publicly apologized for not reporting on the deals, and had denied any meetings with CHEN Yu-hao, his presenting what was apparent proof had resonance. So did the fact that SHEN Fu-hsiung suddenly disappeared. CHEN Yu-hao dramatized the case by saying that the president and first lady had both lied to set him up and take his money, and if anyone could prove different, he would "jump to his death from a skyscraper."¹⁶⁷

The DPP immediately counterattacked, saying the accusations were not new and that CHEN Yu-hao was a fugitive and made the accusations out of revenge. The First Lady promised to take a polygraph test if CHEN Yu-hao would return home and face her, while other DPP officials declared that the accusations by Chen were untrue.¹⁶⁸ But, a few days later, legislator Shen made a public appearance and confirmed that the ex-tycoon had indeed visited the First Lady as he had said.¹⁶⁹

A week before the election, religion was injected into the campaign when DPP supporters attacked a Buddhist monastery after Master Wei Chueh, head of the monastery, had made public statements in support of LIEN Chan and against the referendums. A PFP legislator subsequently criticized the Ministry of Justice for not doing anything about the attack.¹⁷⁰ Some other Buddhists leaders, however, said that Buddhists should not get involved in politics.¹⁷¹ Shortly after this incident the Presbyterian Church endorsed Presi-

166. "Tuntex Tycoon Names DPP Heavyweight as Witness," *China Post*, March 16, 2004, p. 1.

167. Jimmy Chuang, "Former Tuntex Head Says the DPP Set Him Up," *Taipei Times*, March 16, 2004, p. 1.

168. CHANG Yun-ping, "Wu, DPP Officials Rebut Fugitive," *Taipei Times*, March 16, 2004, p. 2.

169. LU Chia-ying, "DPP Legislator Shen Maintains Ex-tycoon Visited First Lady in 1994," *Taiwan News*, March 19, 2004, p. 1.

170. LU Chia-ying, "Fracas Grows over Master's Proclamation," *Taiwan News*, March 16, 2004, p. 1.

171. *Ibid.*

dent Chen for reelection. Church officials said that they supported the candidates "whose ideals are in line with the dignity of mankind and furthering justice and peace. . ." Officials also said the Church did not support candidates that regarded the government of Taiwan as a local government and they wanted to see Taiwan get a new constitution.¹⁷² Other major religious organizations generally remained neutral.

By far the major event affecting the election happened just one day before the voting. While campaigning in the southern city of Tainan, President Chen and Vice President Lu were shot: Chen in the stomach and Lu in the knee. Neither was injury serious, and after brief treatment in a local hospital, the two returned home to Taipei. This was the first time in Taiwan's history that an attempt had been made on the life of a sitting president and one of the few times any leader or politician in Taiwan had been the target of an assassination.¹⁷³ Election activities on both sides were stopped immediately, but the election was not cancelled. The incident seemed certain to affect the election results.

RESULTS, INTERPRETATIONS, REACTIONS

The polls closed at 4 p.m., and vote counting began immediately. With the vote very close and tallies coming in from various election districts more or less at random, the total count saw swings back and forth between favoring the blue and green camps. Because more votes came in from the north first, early counting favored the Pan-blue. Later in the evening the totals consistently indicated a green bloc victory. TVBS (a local television company) did exit polls and promised to provide election results one minute after the polls closed. But due to the close vote and their pledge to publish the results only if there was a 6 percent gap, they withheld their exit polling results.¹⁷⁴

172. LU Chia-ying, "Presbyterian Church Backs Chen-Lu Ticket," *Taiwan News*, March 19, 2004, p. 2.

173. In 1970 two students from Taiwan tried to assassinate Vice Premier (and later president) CHIANG Ching-kuo at the Plaza Hotel in New York where he was to speak. In 1976, activists from the Taiwan Independence Movement sent a letter bomb to Taiwan Governor (later vice president) HSIEH Tung-min, injuring his hand, which had to be subsequently amputated. In 1980, LIN Yi-hsiung's mother and twin daughters were murdered in their home. Lin was an opposition activist who was elected to the National Assembly in 1977 and was imprisoned after the Kaohsiung Incident in 1979. He later became chairman of the DPP.

174. "Election Race too Close to Call. TVBS Exit Polls Found," *China Post*, March 21, 2004, p. 2.

The final count was 6,471,970 votes for President Chen and Vice President Lu and 6,442,452 for former vice president LIEN Chan and former governor James Soong. The margin was less than 30,000 votes. Chen and Lu got 51.11 percent of the vote; Lien and Soong got 49.89 percent. The voter turnout was 80.28 percent, or 13,251,719 out of 16,507,179 qualified voters. There were 337,297 invalid votes.¹⁷⁵

Both of the referendums failed because the number of people casting votes on them was below the required 50 percent. Referendum number one (concerning the purchase of missiles) attracted a voter turnout of 45.17 percent. Of those voting, 87.4 percent voted yes; 7.8 percent voted no; and 4.8 percent cast invalid votes. On referendum number two (concerning opening negotiations with China) the turnout was 45.12 percent. Of the votes cast, 84.9 percent were yes votes; 7.3 percent were no votes; and 7.8 percent were invalid votes.¹⁷⁶

The areas of Taiwan where the green bloc and blue team candidates won were very similar to the split between Chen and Soong in 2000. The green team won in the counties and cities in the southwestern part of the island. The blue bloc won in the northern counties and cities and in the eastern part of the island, except for Ilan County and Taichung County and city. Lien and Soong also captured Penghu County (the Penghu or Pescadore Islands) and the Offshore Islands (Quemoy and Matsu, just off the coast of China).¹⁷⁷ Chen and Lu won the biggest in Tainan County (where Chen was born) and Chiayi County just to the north: 64.79 percent and 62.79 percent respectively. They won big in Kaohsiung city (Taiwan's second largest city) and Tainan city: 58.40 percent and 57.77 percent. Lien and Soong won by the biggest margins in Lianchiang County (Matsu) and Kinmen County (Quemoy): 94.24 percent and 93.95 percent. They also did well in Hualien County (70.20 percent), Taitung County (65.52 percent), and Hsinchu County

175. These statistics were taken from Central Election Commission announcements. See Cody Yiu, "Chen Overcomes the Odds," *Taipei Times*, March 21, 2004, p. 13. Other newspapers in Taiwan reported the same data.

176. See Brian Hsu, "Military Purchases will Continue Despite Vote," *Taipei Times*, March 21, 2004, p. 20 and Melody Chen, "China Wins as Referendum Fails," *Taipei Times*, March 21, 2004, p. 21.

177. "Voters Decide on Another Four Years of A-bian," *Taipei Times*, March 21, 2004, p. 15.

(64.06 percent). They won 56.53 percent of the vote in Taipei City (Taiwan's largest city and the nation's capital).¹⁷⁸

The area where there was a switch in support was in central Taiwan. In 2000, Taichung and Changhua counties went for Soong, but this time the DPP won both. Officials in Taichung said that the change was the result of the growth of a Taiwanese consciousness, concern about Chinese missiles, and the talk of opening up of more direct trade links with China, which would hurt farmers in the county. The mayor of Taichung City, Jason Hu, said that the shooting made a big difference.¹⁷⁹ Regarding the advances made in both counties, one observer noted that the DPP's organization had improved and that Chen and the DPP started campaigning there early. Another said Chen's promise to build a science park in the area helped in a major way.¹⁸⁰ Thus, while Chen got only 37 percent of the vote in Taichung County in 2000, he got 52 percent this time. In Changhua County, Chen got 40 percent of the vote in 2000 and 52.26 percent in this election.¹⁸¹

In the southeast, a DPP stronghold, Chen and Lu did well — as they had in 2000. Experts attributed their success to a stronger native consciousness there, the shooting, and good campaign work that DPP local officials had done in this part of Taiwan. Frank Hsieh, mayor of Kaohsiung and one of the party's main strategists, was also said to have facilitated the DPP victory.¹⁸²

The northern part of the island went blue as it had in 2000. Residents of Taipei City gave almost 57 percent of their votes to Lien and Soong. Some attributed this to the charge that President Chen focused his attention on other parts of Taiwan and diverted funds away from Taipei because of bitterness over losing the mayoral election in 1998, plus differences he had had with Taipei Mayor MA Ying-jeou. Some cited Taipei's greater number of Mainland Chinese, it being more cosmopolitan, and its citizens being better educated. Some experts said that Chen and Lu won more support than they would have otherwise because of the referendums.

178. *Ibid.*

179. Joy Su, "Taichung, Changhua switch Sides to back DPP," *Taipei Times*, March 21, 2004, p. 14.

180. Interestingly, DPP strategists used a film clip of Taichung Mayor Jason Hu (a member of the KMT) praising President Chen and Premier Yu for building the science park. Mayor Hu protested using his statements in the campaign, but his complaint seemed to have little effect.

181. *Ibid.*

182. CHIU Yu-tzu, "Southern Taiwan goes green," *Taipei Times*, March 21, 2004, p. 14.

Chen's funding of Hakka programs and boosting tourism, which helped the economy of the area, were also said to have helped Chen.¹⁸³

The two sides interpreted the election results very differently. The media and observers gave some unusual twists to the meaning of the voting data as well.

Pan-blue's interpretation of the final vote tally was that Lien and Soong did not, in fact, lose the election. Some argued that the results of the vote were yet to be determined. Others, looking at the vote tally and hearing the view that Chen and Lu won, say Lien and Soong were cheated: President Chen and the green team stole the election. Lien and Soong said this, and their supporters believed it. They cited what they call the "staged shooting," the fact that many military and police (who would mostly have voted blue) were deprived of their right to vote because President Chen ordered them to remain at their posts after the shooting, the inordinate number of invalid votes (many fold when compared to previous elections), the "illegal referendums," and other voting irregularities.

Some blue team officials charged that Chen and Lu must have known of the shooting beforehand (and that they planned it or staged it), as evidenced by their behavior immediately afterwards: stirring up emotions among the populace of the south (where voters choose their favorite candidates largely based upon emotions); accusing the KMT or Chinese Communist agents, or the two in collaboration, of shooting the president and the vice president; and delaying any response for several hours to create further uncertainty and more sympathy when, in fact, they knew they were not hurt seriously.¹⁸⁴ Given the minor nature of the injuries to the president and vice president, it seems indeed "irregular" that they kept voters in suspense about what had happened. President Chen made a videotape shortly after the shooting (which had occurred in the middle of the afternoon) but did not release it to the media until late that evening. Some said he wanted to "pump up" the sympathy vote.¹⁸⁵

183. Cody Yiu, "North Holds Few Surprises as Vote Goes to Blue Camp," *Taipei Times*, March 21, 2004, p. 14.

184. For Pan-blue's immediate reaction to the vote tally, see various articles in the March 21, 2004 issue of the *China Post*.

185. "Opposition to Petition Court to Annul Election, Hold New Vote," Associated Press, April 1, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/AP/2004/AP-010304-htm>>).

Even those who did not believe that the shooting was an election gambit or a “trick” or said they were not sure, opined that it was the single most influential event that influenced the vote.¹⁸⁶ They said that the shocking nature of the event and the extensive reporting by the press could not but have generated sympathy for Chen and Lu. Coming just hours before the polls opened the shooting had to affect some voters, probably a large number, to vote for the incumbents. Blue team analysts also noted that Chen and Lu had been trying to “liven up” their base, which because of their bad performance in office had abandoned them in significant numbers. Otherwise they were going to lose the election. Indeed the polls showed there had been, and no doubt still were, a vast number of undecided voters. They likewise note that what Chen, Lu and their party strategists did after the shooting — accusing KMT or Chinese agents of an attempted assassination (when it did not appear to be a serious attempt at killing either Chen or Lu), exaggerating the seriousness of their wounds with a phony x-ray, and delaying an announcement that they were all right — had to have had an impact on the electorate. They further charged that making accusations of involvement by the KMT or China and possible complicity more in the south, where the voters are less educated and support Chen more, was a good election tactic that seemed to have been calculated in advance.¹⁸⁷

Pan-blue leaders pointed out that 18 years earlier Chen had appeared at an election-eve rally in Tainan, the same place where the shooting had taken place and not far from his hometown, carrying an intravenous drip and claiming that someone from the Nationalist Party had poisoned him.¹⁸⁸ Not long after he seemed quite normal and healthy. Thus, the shooting “event” had a precedent, and Chen had a “history” of pulling such stunts.

In addition, events surrounding the shooting, blue team people said, were highly suspicious. When the shooting took place, no one heard the shots, not even the president's bodyguards. The president and vice president were then taken to a hospital but not to the closest one. They went to a private hospital, where they could, it was

186. See Raymond R. Wu, “Prospects for the Pan-blue in Post-2004 Presidential Election Taiwan,” (paper presented at a conference in Singapore sponsored by the East Asian Institute, National University of Singapore, on June 21, 2004).

187. These ideas are based on the author's interviews with blue team supporters after the election.

188. Keith Bradsher and Joseph Kahn, “Taiwan's Leader Wins Re-election; tally is disputed,” *New York Times*, March 21, 2004, p.

said, "control the environment."¹⁸⁹ The hospital was, moreover, not on the Secret Services' list. A nurse at the hospital said that security people had been there the day before to "look around." Later a well-known doctor said that he had gone to the hospital to see Chen and Lu and asked the hospital to save the tissue from their injuries, but was told that it had already been discarded. He subsequently stated that the doctors attending to the president and vice president did not even wear the proper clothing.¹⁹⁰

In addition, Pan-blue spokespersons noted the wounds caused by the bullets were superficial surface wounds, not the kind one usually incurs when a person is hit by a bullet. The bullet that supposedly hit the president ended up in his coat. Later it was reported that half of it was in his coat, the other half on the floor of the jeep.¹⁹¹ This, many said, was very odd. It was obvious, Pan-blue supporters said, that it was not a real assassination attempt judging from the fact the bullets were not from large caliber guns, seemed to have little velocity, and were not aimed at a vital place on the body. The subsequent investigation, blue team supporters said, was "casual" if not slipshod. According to the owner of a shop on the street, his son found the shell casings more than three hours later where a police car had been parked.¹⁹²

Before the shooting most indicators pointed unequivocally to a blue team victory. The March 13 blue camp rally, as noted earlier, had been bigger by a palpable margin than the green bloc's February 28 rally. Most of the polls done ten days before the election, after which it became illegal to publish opinion surveys, pointed to a Pan-blue victory. Accusations that Chen had received NT\$14 million in illegal contributions from Tuntex tycoon CHEN You-hao and a fine imposed on Chen because his wife, already under fire for profiting from the stock market while her husband was president, had failed to report huge stock profits, obviously hurt Chen. In fact, it was reported that the CHEN You-hao scandal cost him one or two percent of the vote.¹⁹³

189. *Ibid.*

190. See "Doubts and Debate Over Chen Shooting Raging On," *China Post*, March 28, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.lexis-nexis.com>>).

191. Philip P. Pan, "Taiwanese President, Vice President Wounded in Shooting," *Washington Post*, March 19, 2004

192. Bradsher and Kahn, "Taiwan's Leader Wins Re-election; Tally is Disputed," *New York Times*, March 21, 2004, p. 1.

193. See Ong Hwee Hwee, "Chen's Camp Reels from Series of Blows," *Straits Times*, March 17, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/ST/2004/ST-170304-htm>>).

The odds in gambling houses in the U.K. (where such bets are legal) favored Lien and so did the odds makers in Taiwan.¹⁹⁴ According to one source, the odds in favor of Lien calculated by local gamblers gave him an 800,000-vote margin.¹⁹⁵ Movements in the stock market said the same thing.¹⁹⁶ The stock market rose the last days of the campaign, anticipating blue team to win, since it was widely believed that Lien and Soong would be able to manage the economy better than Chen had and increase Taiwan's economic growth. Companies with DPP investments, such as Taiwan Salt Company and Taiwan Fertilizer Company, saw their shares drop just before the voting.¹⁹⁷ Finally, an exit poll indicated that Pan-blue had won. An American pollster who helped a local television station conduct an exit poll said his survey had shown Lien leading by a solid margin of 6 percent and winning with 53 percent of the vote compared to Chen's 47 percent.¹⁹⁸ Before the shooting, foreign reporters interpreted comments by high DPP officials as reflecting pessimism and anticipation that the green bloc would lose.¹⁹⁹ Prior to the shooting spokespersons for the blue alliance talked of winning by 450,000 votes; after the incident many spoke of losing the election because of the sympathy vote and the impact it had on undecided voters.²⁰⁰

Not only did he win sympathy votes, asserted blue team leaders, but President Chen activated the "national security protocol" after the shooting incident, causing an estimated 200,000 military

194. See "International presidential poll gamblers questioned," *China Post*, March 18, 2004, p. 1. Foreign reporters were talking of local gambling on the election just before the shooting and mentioned the odds were in favor of Lien. This was even mentioned in the press; see "Police Investigating Assassination Attempt on President Chen, VP Lu," *China Post*, March 20, 2004, p. 19.

195. Alice Hung, "Taiwan Opposition Unveils Blueprint for China Links," Reuters, March 16, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/Reu/2004/Reuters-160304-htm>>).

196. Many stocks of companies close to the KMT went up at this time while DPP tied companies generally went down. The stock market going up just before the shooting also indicated a blue victory.

197. See ONG Hwee Hwee, "Chen's Camp Reels from Series of Blows," *Straits Times*, March 17, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/ST/2004/ST-170304-htm>>).

198. Cited in Keith Bradsher and Joseph Kahn, "Taiwan's Leader Wins Re-election; tally is disputed," *New York Times*, March 21, 2004, p.

199. See ONG Hwee Hwee, "Chen's Camp Reels from Series of Blows," *Straits Times*, March 17, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/ST/2004/ST-170304-htm>>).

200. Taijing Wu, "Pan-blue Camp Admits Attack Could Dash Hopes," *Taiwan News*, March 20, 2004, p.1.

and police not to be able to get to the polls to vote. They had been traditional blue supporters. Lien and Soong supporters felt this was planned and that it made a difference in who won the election. In addition, 337,297 votes were invalidated, nearly triple the number nullified in the 2000 election and 11-fold of Chen's margin of victory. The large number of such votes is difficult to explain by any means, leading one to believe that there had been vote tampering. Since the green team was in power it was most likely their doing.

Blue supporters also contended that the fact the referendums did not pass was evidence that Chen did not win the election. Since Chen had said that the referendums "defined" his campaign, and that he staked his reputation on them, how could he lose on the referendums and still win the election? President Chen had indeed linked the referendum vote to a vote for his continued presidency, even declaring that without passage of the referendums his winning would be "meaningless."²⁰¹ If he got over 50 percent of the vote, Pan-blue critics asked, how could it be that the referendums did not pass? Blue team spokespersons, said with most election observers agreeing with them, opined that the vote on the referendums should have been similar to or even exceeded in number the vote for Chen and Lu.

According to green team "official" analysts, the result of the election was final soon after the voting (not undetermined as Pan-blue suggested). The results, they said, corresponded to earlier polls (that predicted a close contest), and there was no cheating, the issue of invalid votes being easily explainable in terms of more strict standards and the One Million Invalid Vote Alliance effort to get voters to cast improper votes as a means of protest. The number of military who did not vote was normal.²⁰²

The vote tally, moreover, indicated a big win for Chen, Lu, and the DPP, notwithstanding the fact the total received by each side was very close. Their argument was that the DPP had traditionally won 30-some percent of the votes in national elections and had never broken the 40 percent threshold. The blue team (the KMT in the past and Soong and Lien in the 2000 election) won typically

201. Alice Hung, "Taiwan High Court Seals Election Ballot Boxes," Reuters, March 21, 2004, (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/Reu/2004/Reuters-210304-htm>>).

202. For the Chen administration's analysis of the election, see "Taiwan's 2004 Presidential Election and its Aftermath: Reports and Commentaries," on the Government Information Office's website at <<http://gio.gov.tw/taiwan-website/4oa/20040326/2004032604.html>>.

two-thirds or more of the popular vote — 60 percent in 2000 (as Lien and Soong noted when they formed a joint party ticket). Hence, the fact that Chen and his party made more than a 10 percent gain over both the party's "normal" performance and over what Chen won in 2000 must be considered a big gain. Not only that, but winning over 50 percent of the vote, they argued, meant that the green bloc was now unquestionably in the majority.²⁰³

When looking at the data in more detail the argument for a big victory is even more convincing, green supporters said. Chen garnered an increase of greater than 10 percent in 17 of Taiwan's 25 counties and cities. The Chen-Lu ticket gained 15.28 percent in Taichung County and won the county, which Soong had won in 2000. According to the conventional wisdom before the election whichever side won in central Taiwan would win the election.²⁰⁴ The green team made gains in the Offshore Islands, Nantou County (seat of the Taiwan Provincial Government where James Soong had very strong support stemming from his being Taiwan Governor), and even in Taipei. (Chen gained 6 percent in Taipei over 2000.)²⁰⁵

Pan-green scholars further noted that these big gains can be easily explained by the much better DPP organization, Chen's being a charismatic president, the force of localism, overconfidence on the part of Lien and Soong (because of their lead in the polls early on), the referendums, Chen's proposal to write a new constitution, incumbency, and the Chen administration's successful efforts in winning over the Hakka vote by promoting the Hakka language, setting up a Hakka television station, and promoting their culture.²⁰⁶

Specifically, Chen supporters explained their candidates' victory, more than anything else, to a growing "Taiwanese identity." It is very obvious, they said, that more and more people in Taiwan now identify with Taiwan (rather than China) and call themselves Taiwanese (as opposed to Chinese). Indeed, this trend has been quite apparent for a decade and has grown fast in recent years. In

203. See Jerome Keating, "Missing Millions and Hard Numbers," *Taipei Times*, June 2, 2004, p. 8.

204. Lawrence Chung, "Central Taiwan Holds Key to Polls Victory," *Straits Times*, March 18, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/ST/2004/St-180304.htm>>).

205. See LO Chih-cheng, "Taiwan's 2004 Presidential Election: The Day After," (paper presented at a conference in Singapore sponsored by the East Asian Institute, National University of Singapore, on June 21, 2004). The statistics are taken from the Central Election Commission.

206. *Ibid.*

December, the number of people polled who said they were Taiwanese had jumped from 17 percent (11 years earlier) to over 43 percent, while those seeing themselves as Chinese fell from 26 percent to 7 percent.²⁰⁷ Because of this Chen was able to play upon localization feelings and label Lien and Soong as unpatriotic and not caring for Taiwan. This was a big advantage for Chen. It also explains why Lien and Soong's shifts in policy to support a separate Taiwan while dropping unification (at least in the short run) did not resonate with voters.²⁰⁸

They also cited Chen's charisma (evidenced by the televised dates with Lien), his energy, and his ability to campaign. They said that Annette Lu is also indefatigable and that she helped win the independence vote and the female vote. They mentioned that Chen is more like the common person, growing up in poverty, and that being from south Taiwan he was able to win big there. They said voters identified with him because he is Taiwanese. Lien, they said is half Taiwanese (and no one thinks of him as being typical Taiwanese) and Soong is not native-born.

Green analysts say that, while the referendums did not pass, holding the referendums helped Chen. They point out that of those who voted in the election, 58 percent participated in the referendum vote, and an overwhelming majority voted yes to both questions. Since the number of referendum ballots exceeded the vote that Chen-Lu ticket received, there must have been some gain to Chen and Lu because of the referendum. Certainly a meaningful number of pro-blue voters voted for the referendum, so it can be assumed that some changed their voting preference in favor of Chen. One writer contends that Lien, had he approved of the referendums rather than calling for a boycott, might have won the election.²⁰⁹

Pan-green spokespersons argued that the shooting did not give Chen and Lu the election victory or at least that there is no strong evidence of this. Their reasoning is that the sympathy vote certainly does not account for the more than 10 percent gain the green team made from the 2000 election. They also say that if the shooting helped Chen it was largely because of the blue camp responding in a dysfunctional manner to the event and alienating voters. In particular they point to well-known T.V. host and former DPP spokes-

207. *Ibid.* Data are from the Election Study Center, National Chengchi University.

208. *Ibid.*

209. *Ibid.*

person, Sissy Chen, giving a press conference the evening before Election Day during which she charged that the shooting was a "trick" staged by Chen and Lu to win sympathy from voters. Subsequent opinion polls indicate that what she said turned off voters and probably caused some undecided voters to cast ballots for the president and vice president.²¹⁰ In any event, if blue team leaders felt that the shooting would impact the election in favor of Chen and Lu they could have asked to have the election postponed. They did not, either because they felt they would win or because the event, they thought, would not change the results, or both.²¹¹

Green bloc spokespersons also claim that President Chen calling the military to remain at their posts likewise did not influence the election. They point to the fact that the Ministry of National Defense denied that this event gave Chen the election victory and that only one-ninth of service members were kept in camp while one-sixth had to remain on duty during the 1996 election.²¹² Pan-green supporters also contend that the KMT bet money on the election in order to change the odds and make it appear that they were winning when they were not, and, furthermore, that most of the invalid votes were votes cast for Chen and Lu.²¹³

It was clear from the diametrically opposed views held by the two camps that reconciliation between the green and blue blocs was going to be difficult. It also looked as if it was going to take some time. One could have also predicted in the immediate wake of the election that the results were going to be challenged and that the election might create serious political problems in Taiwan in coming months and likely polarization and gridlock would continue for longer than that.

IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE ELECTION

On the evening of March 20 when the final vote tally was announced, supporters of President Chen and Vice President Lu celebrated at campaign headquarters in Taipei and in cities and villages throughout Taiwan. "This victory is for Taiwan's democracy, and for its people," Chen said.²¹⁴ At least 100,000 people showed up at

210. *Ibid.*

211. *Ibid.* The author opined to this writer that Pan-blue might have won the election had they asked to postpone the election.

212. *Ibid.*

213. LEE Chang-kuei, "The KMT Must Ditch Lien, Merger Plans," *Taipei Times*, June 25, 2004, p. 9.

214. "Chen Re-elected," *China Post*, March 21, 2004, p. 1.

party headquarters to celebrate. Many spoke of the election as a win for democracy, a defeat for China, and Taiwan's independence now being assured.²¹⁵ But Chen supporters also spoke of Chen "beating the odds" and coming through at the last moment. To many the victory seemed unexpected.²¹⁶

Even before the euphoria subsided, President Chen called on his supporters not to be arrogant; he talked of love and tolerance. He also spoke of unifying all ethnic groups and pushing forward with political reform. Chen extended his respect to Lien and Soong and pledged to engage in serious dialogue with the opposition.²¹⁷ He appeared almost apologetic, some observers said. Chen's victory statement was superficial and did not seem well organized or well planned. It was a stressful moment. But some observers commented that he was not prepared for a victory speech and that it appeared that Chen felt that he was not sure he had really won.²¹⁸

LIEN Chan's first comments showed anger. He said it was an "unfair election." Thus he called for both annulling the election and for a recount of the votes. Specifically, Lien demanded that the Central Election Commission immediately seal all ballot boxes at the approximately 13,000 polling sites in preparation for a recount. "If we remain silent at this time, how are we supposed to give history, the 23 million people, and our offspring an answer?" he asked. James Soong declared the election "had been manipulated from beginning to end." Other Pan-blue leaders reiterated what Lien and Soong had said and also spoke of the "silver bullet" (magic bullet), suggesting the shooting was fake or contrived and that it had changed the election results. Still others said vote fraud gave Chen and Lu the win. Blue team supporters were deeply disappointed and very angry over the election results. Many were in tears.²¹⁹ How justified were their reactions? It is difficult to say. Some opined that time would tell and it would eventually come out

215. Jane Rickards, "Jubilation as Crowds Celebrate Chen Victory," *China Post*, March 21, 2004, p. 1.

216. Cody Yiu, "Chen Overcomes the Odds," *Taipei Times*, March 21, 2004, p. 13.

217. CHANG Yun-ping, "Nation Needs to Stick Together," *Taipei Times*, March 21, 2004, p. 16.

218. The writer heard these comments at the time. One observer told me that the DPP had made a sign saying "God Bless Taiwan" to use after the election's blue victory. Chen and Lu also used the term "thank God" as they cast their votes, which some saw as unusual since neither are Christians. See LIN Chieh-yu, "Chen, Lu thank God as they Cast Their Votes," *Taipei Times*, March 21, 2004, p. 16.

219. Amber Wang, "Lien Demands CEC Annual Election, Calls for Recount," *China Post*, March 21, 2004, p. 1.

whether the election was stolen or not. In any case, an opinion survey conducted at this time showed that most people agreed with Lien's charge that the election was unfair.²²⁰

The foreign reaction was definitely different from what it had been after previous elections in Taiwan. Most major newspapers and magazines in the United States and other Western countries reported on the closeness of the election and the protest and violence that followed. Many observed that the election had created tension between the U.S. and China. Some said they were glad it was over, thinking that it had created some danger. Few praised Taiwan's democratization or congratulated the winners with the enthusiasm they had shown after previous elections.²²¹ Some reporters said they did not want to take sides since it appeared the results might not be certain. Others said there were too many doubts to call this a "good" election or a positive mark for Taiwan's democracy. A larger number of reporters, perhaps most, seemed to take Taiwan's democratization for granted or felt that Taiwan was already a democracy and did not need to be lauded anymore for its political progress.²²²

Violence broke out in several cities in Taiwan in the wake of the vote tallying, even though Lien had asked his supporters to remain calm. Pan-blue supporters' feelings of being cheated were too strong. Many said they hated Chen and Lu for "ruining the country," supporting independence, and for other reasons. Many condemned the Pan-green leaders for their dishonesty and bigotry (by exploiting ethnic enmity during the campaign to win votes), and all-in-all for "hijacking" the election. At least 20,000 blue supporters staged a sit-in that night in front of the presidential palace in Taipei yelling "examine the ballots" and "A-bian step down." Some screamed obscenities. Armed police watched behind barricades

220. According to a survey published by *Liberty Times*, 57.56 percent of respondents said yes and 38.43 percent said no, when asked about KMT supporters taking to the streets to protest. 47.2 percent said it was a good thing, 46.95 percent said it was not. See *Liberty Times*, March 21, 2004, p. 2.

221. This was the theme of the reporting in most of the U.S. as well as foreign news services, newspapers, and magazines. However, one suggested that it indicated that an independent Taiwan was a reality. See Jonathan Mirsky, "Why Not an Independent Taiwan?" *International Herald Tribune*, March 24, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/News/2004/IHT-240304-htm>>).

222. The writer spoke to a number of reporters in Taipei after the election to arrive at this conclusion. However, this view is confirmed when reading the stories about the election in various papers and magazines around the world and comparing them with reports after previous elections in Taiwan.

with water cannons at hand. On Sunday night Taipei Mayor MA Ying-jeou asked the protestors occupying the area around the Presidential Palace to go home, but many refused. The next day, the U.S. representative in Taiwan, AIT Director Douglas Paal, met with Chen and Lien separately to express Washington's concern about the turmoil in Taiwan.²²³ Lien and Soong felt they could not abandon their supporters. Moreover, they shared the feelings of the protestors and did not want to give up.

The first business day following the election, Defense Minister TANG Yao-ming resigned. Rumors spread, fanned by Pan-blue, that Tang had quit because of disgust and guilt feelings over the underhanded tactics used by the DPP during the election, especially Chen's order that kept a large number of military people from going to the polls. One commentator said that Tang had long tried to remain politically neutral and could not stomach what had happened in this election.²²⁴ The same day Taiwan's stock market fell by 6.68 percent (or US\$ 28 billion) — the biggest drop in almost a decade — due to investor concern about the chaotic situation and the apparent Pan-blue defeat.²²⁵ The next day it dropped even further.

President Chen appeared to think that he had to take some initiative lest Pan-blue protests gain credibility and momentum and the chaos that plagued Taipei worsen. In response to Pan-blue charges that the shooting was a fake, the Presidential office released photos of Chen's wound to the abdomen. Presidential spokesman James Huang said that the photos proved the shooting was real and, furthermore, that they could have been released during the campaign to help Chen win more votes but were not.²²⁶ President Chen later challenged Pan-blue accusers to let him pay the world's best marksman to try to graze them with a bullet in a jeep going seventeen miles per hour. "The jeep doesn't even have

223. Charles Snyder, "U.S. Urges Calm in Face of Turmoil," *Taipei Times*, March 22, 2004, p. 4.

224. Lawrence Chung, "Defense Minister Quits in Blow to Chen Government," *Straits Times*, March 23, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/ST/2004?St-230304-htm>>).

225. Joyce Huang, "TAIEX Falls Nearly 7% as Investors Panic over Election," *Taipei Times*, March 23, 2004, p. 1.

226. "Taiwan's Anti-Chen Camp Stick it Out in Streets," Associated Press, March 22, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/AP?2004?AP-220304-htm>>).

to be moving," he said. Chen also insisted that the shooting did not affect the number of military people given leave to vote.²²⁷

Meanwhile, (on the Sunday following the election) the high court ordered all ballot boxes sealed as evidence.²²⁸ DPP officials originally opposed Lien's request. But, President Chen answered Pan-blue's call for a recount saying he had no objections, although he said that he did not like Lien's "inflammatory language"²²⁹. Chen subsequently promised to instruct lawmakers from his party to vote for such a bill (in fact, one making a recount automatic if the margin of victory was less than 1 percent).²³⁰

Pan-blue protest continued. Blue leaders sought to force both a recount and an investigation into the shooting. Some sincerely felt there was a chance to overturn the election. Others wanted to vent their feelings. President Chen and the DPP did not wish to stop them by force; after all they had used such means to rise to power. Also this would have sullied Chen's proclaimed victory. Nor did Chen want to provoke Pan-blue. DPP party officials even ordered their supporters not to go near Pan-blue people wearing DPP logos on their clothing.²³¹ Chen and his party hoped the demonstrations would peter out, the tide of public opinion would shift in their favor, and that Lien and Soong would eventually be seen as sore losers. He also, it was reported, expected tensions to develop within the blue camp.

Chen was right. The demonstrations caused traffic jams and other inconveniences, and this put a wedge between Lien and Soong on the one side and Taipei Mayor Ma on the other. Ma was responsible for running the city and needed to keep order. Also, he perceived (according to some observers at least) that his image would suffer if Taipei continued to be paralyzed and that if Lien and Soong lost or could not change the results, as increasingly it

227. Keith Bradsher, "Taiwan's President Seems Secure despite Huge Rally," *New York Times*, March 28, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/ NYT/2004/NYT-280304-htm>>).

228. Alice Hung, "Taiwan High Court Seals Election Ballot Boxes," *Reuters*, March 21, 2004, (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/Reu/2004/Reuters-210304-htm>>).

229. "Call for Recount in Taiwan Vote," CNN.com, March 20, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/CNN/2004/CNN-200304.htm>>).

230. Keith Bradsher and Joseph Kahn, "Taiwanese President Agrees to Recount," *New York Times*, March 23, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/ NYT/2004/NYT-230304-htm>>).

231. "Half-Million Taiwanese Protest Election," Associated Press, March 27, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/AP/2004/AP-270304-htm>>).

seemed was the case, leadership of the KMT might be his for the taking. This created a rift in the blue camp.

President Chen and Vice President Lu wanted the United States to issue an official message of congratulations to dampen the controversy over the election results and undermine Pan-blue protest. Vice President Lu even suggested that President Bush should send some high officials to Taiwan to do that.²³² Six days after the voting, when the Election Commission officially declared Chen the winner of the election, Washington responded to the Election Commission's decision by sending a message of congratulations. But it was terse and White House press secretary Scott McClellan said the U.S. "recognized the pending legal challenges to the results."²³³

China responded with displeasure over Washington's message. Chinese leaders interpreted the U.S. statement as contrary to its one-China policy. Thus the election visibly caused tension between Washington and Beijing. Chinese leaders separately declared that they would not "look on indifferently if the current situation in Taiwan worsens and spirals out of control."²³⁴ (China was on record as promising military action if Taiwan was enveloped in chaos, and the situation was being described that way.) Various state-controlled papers in China referred to CHEN Shui-bian's "kidnapping the people's will and committing political fraud."²³⁵ Chinese leaders, on the other hand, expressed satisfaction over the failure of the referendums, which they had called a "provocative attempt to undermine cross-strait relations and split the motherland." They said it was proven to be an "illegal act that goes against the will of the people."²³⁶ At this time some observers saw Beijing's response as moderate and calculated; others said there was definite hostility and anger in China as well as disappointment that Pan-blue had lost.

232. "Taiwan Election Winners Urge US to Recognize Result," Agence France Presse, March 25, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/AFP/2004/AFP-250304-htm>>).

233. Half-Million Taiwanese Protest Election," Associated Press, March 27, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/AP/2004/AP-270304-htm>>).

234. "Mainland Issues Warning to Taiwan after Violent Protest Breaks Out," *People's Daily*, March 27, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/News/2004/PD-270304-htm>>).

235. Jason Leow, "China: Referendum a Tool to 'Kidnap People's Will,'" *Straits Times*, March 24, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/ST/2004/ST-240304-htm>>).

236. See Edward Cody, "Beijing Walks Softly Around Taiwan Vote," *Washington Post*, March 23, 2004, p. A15.

On March 29, President Chen gave an interview to reporters of the *Washington Post* that immediately provoked a hostile reaction from the opposition, the United States, and China.²³⁷ Chen stated that the voters' options boiled down to a choice "between love and hate." He further said the outcome had given him a mandate to press ahead with plans to develop Taiwan as an "independent, sovereign country." He rejected the idea of one-China and stated that China's rule of Hong Kong has been a negative example for Taiwan and that the recent problems have caused the citizens of Taiwan to move further toward a separate identity. Most provocative, though, was Chen's promise to go ahead with his proposal to write a new constitution by 2006 (and have it approved in 2008).²³⁸

A PFP lawmaker said Chen had insulted the people with the love and hate comment. Joining the fray, SU Chi, former head of the Mainland Affairs Council, asserted that Chen was pushing Taiwan "to the verge of danger (of war)." He also declared that unless the United States "stand sentry" over Taiwan, the people must be "prepared for war."²³⁹ Mayor MA Ying-jeou said he was astounded at the remarks and said Chen should offer evidence for what he was saying or apologize. Officials in Beijing spoke of Chen's "stubborn adherence to independence" and of "dire consequences" if he persisted. The U.S. Department of State reiterated President Bush's December statement that the U.S. opposed any change in the status quo and said the United States holds Chen to his 2000 inauguration speech promises not to declare independence, change the name of the island, add LEE Teng-hui's state-to-state doctrine (about Taiwan-China relations) to the Constitution, or to promote a referendum about Taiwan's status.²⁴⁰

The tenor of China's continued attacks on Chen seemed to mirror a change of perception in Beijing about Taiwan. In fact, LI Jiaquan, founder and long-time chief of the Taiwan Research Institute (attached to the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences) stated that China's peaceful reunification policy was now seen as a failure

237. "Taiwan's President Chen Shui-bian," *Washington Post*, March 29, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/WP/2004/WP-290304-htm>>).

238. For some interpretation of the interview, see Glenn Kessler, "U.S. Cautions Taiwan on Independence," *Washington Post*, April 22, 2004, p. A22.

239. "Taiwan Pushes to Verge of War: Su Chi," *China Post*, March 31, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/News/2004/CP-310304.htm>>).

240. "China, U.S. Reiterate Their Opposition to Taiwan Independence," *Bloomberg*, March 31, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/News/2004/BB-310304-htm>>).

and that there was no hope in the foreseeable future for a president in Taiwan that espoused a one-China view. He noted that the KMT had previously advocated one China, but by their own interpretation, that was now gone. And, although Taiwan had accepted the "92 consensus," it no longer did.²⁴¹

In early April, Minister of the Interior YU Cheng-hsien and Police Chief CHANG Shih-liang resigned "in the aftermath" of the shooting.²⁴² Soon after this, Foreign Minister Eugene Chien tendered his resignation (which was accepted) after Therese Shaheen, head of the American Institute in Taiwan (the organization outside Washington DC responsible for managing U.S.-Taiwan relations), was "fired" for sending President Chen a formal letter of congratulations on winning the election.²⁴³ The blue team interpreted the spate of resignations (including some others) — coinciding with their demonstrations, calls for a vote recount, and two lawsuits — as proof that the Chen administration lacked credibility because the election victory was phony. President Chen reacted saying the opposition's protests were an "aborted coup d'etat."²⁴⁴

In what appeared a delayed reaction to Chen's comments to the *Post*, the State Department conveyed a detailed warning to President Chen. James Kelly, Assistant Secretary of State for Asia and the Pacific, testifying before the House International Relations Committee, stated that there was a "misunderstanding" in Taiwan that the United States "would defend them at all costs." He further asserted that unilateral moves toward independence could "provoke a Chinese military response" that could "destroy much of what Taiwan has built and crush its hopes for the future." Kelly called for dialogue between Taipei and Beijing without conditions. The Chen administration's response was to deny that its plans to amend the Constitution constituted a step toward independence. Newly appointed Foreign Minister CHEN Tan-sun said: "I firmly

241. CHING Cheong, "Beijing Starts Soul-Search: Who Lost Taiwan?" *Straits Times*, April 7, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.lexis-nexis.com>>).

242. "Taiwan Minister, Police Chief Resign over Shooting of President," Agence France Presse, April 5, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/AP/2004/AP-050404-htm>>).

243. Lawrence Chung, "Taiwan Foreign Minister Offers to Resign," *Straits Times*, April 10, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/ST/2004/ST0100404-htm>>).

244. "Taipei Military Rejects Coup Charges by Chen," Agence France Presse, April 28, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/AFP/2004/AFP-280404-htm>>).

believe that the constitutional reform will be carried out under the existing framework.”²⁴⁵

China's delayed responses, though not put off very long, were manifold and together suggested Beijing was very angry and that the hostility Chinese leaders harbored for Chen would not pass soon. A few days after Chen's statements, China's official news agency called his proposal for a new constitution a “timetable for independence,” which we “will never tolerate.”²⁴⁶ Two days later, the Chinese government arrested two high ranking military officers for spying for Taiwan. Then the military dispatched eight warships to Hong Kong in the biggest show of military force for some years.²⁴⁷ At the time Chinese leaders asserted that Taiwan had “crossed the red line” while scholars in China voiced their opinion that it was a serious warning to Chen on the independence issue. Later Beijing took aim at Taiwanese businessmen operating in China, saying that “they could not make money in China to support independence in Taiwan.” The Chinese government, in its first public attack on an individual or company, cited HSU Wen-long, head of Chi Mei Corporation. The Chinese media even linked Hsu to LEE Teng-hui and Chen, and specifically to the shooting incident, since President Chen and Vice President Lu went to Chi Mei Hospital owned by Hsu and this engendered suspicions as to why he did not go to a closer hospital.²⁴⁸ As a result of all of this there was speculation that Chinese leaders perceived that Taiwanese investment was no longer important to China and that Chinese leaders were willing to sacrifice some of their economic growth and their global image in order to deal with the problem of Taiwan's independence.²⁴⁹

245. “Taiwan Denies Independence Talk,” BBC, April 23, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/News/2004/BBC-230404-htm>>).

246. “‘New Constitution Means Timetable for Taiwan Independence: Official,” Xinhua News Agency, April 14, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/News/2004/xinhua-140404-htm>>).

247. “China Warships Sail for HK in Beijing's Show of Might,” Associated Press, April 24, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/AP/2004/AP-240404-htm>>).

248. GOH Sui Noi, “China Publicly Lambastes Taiwan Tycoon,” *Straits Times*, June 1, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.lexis-nexis.com>>).

249. In 2003, China passed the United States to become the largest recipient of foreign direct investment. Some, in fact, noted that China had more investment capital than it could use. It was also estimated at this time that sanctions against Taiwan would cause a loss to Taiwan of 1.8 to 3.1 percent of its gross domestic product. See “Sanctions Against Taiwan Might Do China More Harm Than Good, Analysts Warn,” *Agence France Presse*, June 27, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/AFP/>>).

Meanwhile, lawyers for LIEN Chan filed a petition with Taiwan's High Court asking that the more than 300,000 invalid ballots be examined, the issue of a large number of military and police personnel being disenfranchised be investigated, and the unexplained nature of and events associated with the shooting be thoroughly explained. And they wanted the court to consider the legality of the referendums.²⁵⁰ Also, a team of ballistics experts from the United States arrived in Taiwan to give their opinion on the shooting. They reported that it was "unheard of" for a bullet that hit someone to be found in their clothing. They also expressed doubts about the trajectories of the bullets, the nature of the wounds and more.²⁵¹

Pan-blue supporters continued to hold demonstrations. However, they moved from the Presidential Palace where the demonstrators had caused traffic and other disruption to the CHIANG Kai-shek Memorial. They were unrelenting in making the charge that the shooting was staged, noting that no suspects had been identified, no weapons found, and no arrests made, notwithstanding large rewards and extensive police work on the case. The protesters promised not to stop until there was a vote recount and an investigation into the "suspicious election."²⁵² Some students even went on a hunger strike, demanding that the government establish a "truth task force" to investigate the shooting. On April 10, thousands of Pan-blue supporters gathered in Taipei to continue to dispute the election results while calling for a "referendum on the shooting."²⁵³ The demonstration, according to organizers, attracted 300,000 people. It also resulted in dozens of people being injured by police, including two female legislators from the People First Party.²⁵⁴

2004/AFP-270604-htm). The article also mentioned that Taiwan businesses provided 12 million jobs in China.

250. "New Legal Challenge in Taiwan," BBC, March 29, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/News/2004/BBC-290304-htm>>).

251. "Taiwan Court Mulls Opposition's Request," Associate Press, March 30, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/AP/2004/300305-htm>>).

252. "Taiwan Protestors Keep Pressure On," CNN, April 4, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/News/2004/CNN-040404-htm>>).

253. "Taiwan Protestors Call for Referendum on Chen Shooting Probe," AFX News Limited, April 11, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.lexis-nexis.com>>).

254. Keith Bradsher, "Demonstrators Skirmish with Police in Taiwan," *New York Times*, April 10, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org.NYT/2004/ NYT-100404-htm>>) and "Dozens injured, 13 arrested as Taiwan riot police clash with protestors," Agence France Presse, April 11, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.lexis-nexis.com>>).

Hoping to resolve the matter of the shooting, whether fake or not, Henry Lee, the noted U.S. forensic expert who testified in the O.J. Simpson trial, traveled to Taiwan along with his team of experts at the invitation of the government. After completing his analysis, Lee stated that President Chen's wounds were not self-inflicted, thus refuting the notion that he had shot himself or had been shot by bodyguards. But Lee also said that the two bullets that had hit the president and vice-president were homemade, suggesting that the KMT had not been involved, since the act was not done by professionals.²⁵⁵ Lee added that the evidence had been tainted (though not speculating whether it was deliberate or due to sloppy police work) and that because of that he could not say much more about the case. He promised a detailed report in several months. His statement thus resolved part of the issue but also left it a mystery in many ways.²⁵⁶

With the shooting investigation revealing no facts that would help Pan-blue and President Chen carrying out the duties of president as if there was no doubt remaining about the election — including making overtures to China and the United States and promising to alleviate ethnic problems, and deal with other issues, the future of the opposition leaders, Lien and Soong, began to be questioned more seriously. In fact, debate swirled in various political circles about the two leaders and about both opposition parties. Some speculated that the careers of both Lien and Soong were over. Others wondered about the future of the PFP if Soong were to go into political eclipse. Younger PFP members, however, spoke of Soong continuing to lead the party and the PFP winning over nationalist-minded KMT members and improving the party's position in the December election.²⁵⁷

At this juncture, a group of younger reform-oriented members of the KMT formally inaugurated the "567 Alliance." Its manifesto was to promote inter-generational cooperation within the KMT. Its members declared that after the vote recount was completed the

255. David Pierson, "Forensic Expert Hounded for News," *Los Angeles Times*, April 19, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.lexis-nexis.com>>). Also see "Henry Lee Refutes 'Bodyguard Conspiracy Theory,'" *China Post*, April 11, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.lexis-nexis.com>>).

256. It is worth noting that Lee grew up in Taiwan and was a police captain before moving to the United States in 1965. He was invited by the government to investigate the shooting.

257. See William Foreman, "Taiwan Presidential Challenge Loses Steam," *Associate Press*, May 8, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/AP/2004/AP-080504-htm>>).

party should call a provisional full party congress to determine the future of the party and that nomination for the year-end legislative election should be based on professionalism and image rather than experience. They advocated that one-quarter of the candidates should be from the “younger generation” and that the party should promote regionalism as opposed to the DPP’s “parochialism and nativism.”²⁵⁸ Their efforts reflected the feeling that if the Nationalist Party did not change, it would die. In the meantime, Taipei Mayor MA Ying-jeou, in a commentary on the 85th anniversary of the May 4th Movement (precipitated by the public’s angry response to China being “sold out” at the peace conference at Versailles and, historians say, the onset of Chinese nationalism), called for democracy as a “rationally tolerant way of life.” Ma criticized what he labeled as CHEN Shui-bian’s “trinity”: independence, referendum, and constitution.²⁵⁹

Pundits began talking about the leadership of the KMT shifting to Mayor Ma and Legislative Yuan Speaker WANG Jin-pyng. Blue team supporters expressed serious concerns about the viability of the opposition and worried aloud that if something were not done soon, the opposition would suffer a major defeat in the December legislative election. Political polls, however, opined that if LIEN Chan were to concede defeat and step down, the Nationalist Party would collapse. Others said if Soong were to recognize Chen’s victory it would be the end of his career and his party.²⁶⁰ At this time it was reported that the KMT and PFP would merge to form a “stronger” opposition.²⁶¹ But this idea did not go anywhere. There was also talk of “localizing” the KMT by getting rid of the word “Chinese” in its title, which divided the party’s leadership. To some degree, countering these “currents,” the vote recount, which was in progress, revealed various “problems.” In one precinct in the south, considerably more ballots were recorded than handed out. In other places ballots were improperly stored and not certified. One team of judges found ballots counted for the wrong team of candi-

258. “New KMT Reform Alliance to Promote Professionalism,” *China Post*, May 3, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/CP/2004/CP-030504-htm>>).

259. “Democracy is ‘Rationally Tolerant’: Ma,” *China Post*, May 5, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/CP?2004/CP-050504-htm>>).

260. See William Foreman, “Taiwan Presidential Challenge Loses Steam,” *Associate Press*, May 8, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/AP/2004/AP-080504-htm>>).

261. HUANG Tai-lin, “KMT, PFP Ready to Join in Merger,” *Taipei Times*, May 19, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/TT/2004/TT-190504-htm>>).

dates.²⁶² Still, a judicial decision on the election required more time and evidence.

Elsewhere, the United States was putting more pressure on President Chen. Following James Kelly's testimony, State Department officials almost daily warned their counterparts in Taipei about pressing the constitution issue and promoting independence. The State Department seemed to be still upset over Chen's *Washington Post* interview and concerned about hostile rumbles in China about Chen. Simultaneous with the U.S. statements, the media in China announced that Premier WEN Jiabao might introduce legislation that would mandate Taiwan's reunification. Such a law, it was said, would make it difficult for any official to adopt a moderate position on Taiwan.²⁶³ State Department officials expressed grave concern about this and what Chen would say in his inauguration speech on May 20 that would inflame tensions with China.²⁶⁴ According to various sources, the State Department was pushing Chen very hard to give a moderate speech and try to "heal wounds."

In any event, in his inaugural address, President Chen changed his tone very much from the *Washington Post* statements and some other post-election pronouncements. Some observers said he "presented a different Chen." He used the term Republic of China more than Taiwan. He mentioned "reengineering" the constitution rather than scrapping it and writing a new one and even spoke of Taiwan's future possibly being linked to China.²⁶⁵ Observers interpreted the speech as signifying Chen was indeed heeding warnings from the Bush administration not to announce any plans for the next four years that would move Taiwan in the direction of independence.²⁶⁶ Joseph Wu, new director of the Mainland Affairs

262. Stephan Grauwels, "Recount of Taiwan's Presidential Vote Reveals Problems," Associated Press, May 13, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/AP/2004/AP-130504.htm>>).

263. "China to Consider Taiwan Reunification Law-Premier," *Reuters*, May 11, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/Reu/2004/Reuters-110504.htm>>).

264. Susan V. Lawrence, "Bush to Chen: Don't Risk It," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, May 20, 2004, pp. 28-31. While a number of members of Congress expressed strong support for Taipei, the Chen administration seemed to understand that it was necessary to bend to State Department pressure. In any case, it was perceived in Taipei that the White House was listening to the State Department.

265. For the text of the speech, see "President Chen's Inaugural Speech: 'Paving the Way for a Sustainable Taiwan,'" *Taipei Times*, May 20, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taipeitimes.com>>).

266. Edward Cody, "Taiwan President Pledges to Hold off Formal Independence," *Washington Post*, May 20, 2004 (available online at taiwansecurity.org/WP/2004/WP-100504.htm). Also see Ellen Bork, "Chen's Balancing Act," *Weekly Standard*, May 31,

Council (which handles relations with China) said, "The president and his aides. . .had received the message loud and clear."²⁶⁷ The downside for Chen's "very moderate" speech for him and the DPP, was losing support from their base. Would this evoke a split in the green camp?

But Chen's efforts were not enough to satisfy China or to alleviate the Washington-Beijing standoff that was developing. Beijing continued to attack Chen. In fact, contrary to what many Pan-green spokespersons had argued (that China would have to come around and would after the election) China remained very hostile toward the Chen administration. Would this change in coming months? This was a difficult issue to foresee.

In subsequent weeks tension between the U.S. and China escalated in large part as a result of post-election attention shifting to Taiwan's security. The U.S. had been pressing Taipei hard to buy the weapons President Bush had allotted earlier. President Chen proceeded to do this with his election "victory" behind him, or, as Pan-blue said, to make it look that way. The United States responded to China's continued, or worsening, intimidation of Taiwan. Many concluded that the election had made the Taiwan Strait flashpoint even more explosive, had strained U.S.-China relations and had permanently undermined cross-strait ties. Others argued that elections generate emotional feelings and tensions, things subsequently return to normal, and elections are a good cathartic exercise. The truth remained to be seen.

In July, lawyers for the opposition announced that the recount of votes had found irregularities at over 99 percent of voting stations and that it was enough for the court to declare the election null and void. They reported that there were 40,327 disputed votes, 10,017 "phantom" votes (ballots exceeding in number the voters who showed up to vote), 8,289 missing ballots, and 1,194 "booty" ballots (number exceeding the number of registered voters). A separate examination of voters' registration booklets revealed that there were improprieties at 96.44 percent of polling stations. And in central and southern Taiwan, where Chen and Lu won big, they found numerous voters had cast several blank ballots. They also reported that the gap between the two blocs had been reduced to

2004, pp. 17-18. The latter notes that Chen's statement about "no unilateral change to the status quo" in the Taiwan Strait was lifted from Bush's December statement.

267. Cited in Cody, *Ibid.*

21,863 votes.²⁶⁸ The DPP, however, interpreted the reports as an admission that Pan-blue had not won, there were no signs of vote-rigging and that the outcome would not be reversed.²⁶⁹ Thus, it appeared, as of mid-2004, that the issue of election fraud had not been resolved. The question was: Would it ever be?

CONCLUSIONS

The most salient question about the 2004 presidential and vice presidential election was: Did CHEN Shui-bian and Annette Lu wrest the election victory away from LIEN Chan and James Soong by unfair or illegitimate means as Pan-blue supporters have charged? In other words, did they “steal” the election? Some say this question should never be answered, as it will not likely be good for the country. It would certainly reopen wounds and create a host of new problems. Yet serious doubts about the election are likely to persist, which is not good either.

The shooting and events surrounding it were, and remain, suspicious to say the least. What happened 19 hours before the polls opened was simply too coincidental. When they heard the news, many of the foreign reporters in Taiwan remarked that it was too good, or bad (depending on which side you are on), to be true. Most thought Lien and Soong were likely to win and opined that this event might have changed that.²⁷⁰ Later, many said they thought this was the case.²⁷¹ The U.S. Department of State had serious doubts about the election; that is why it refused to congratulate Chen and Lu immediately and, in part at least, why Theresa Shaheen was “fired” for doing so. Officials at State said they wanted to be reasonably sure that evidence of the shooting being a fake in some way would not come out, or at least not soon.

On the other hand, the various theories that there was a conspiracy have failed to gain momentum. One of the first hypotheses offered was that someone on behalf of gamblers, who had bet a lot of money on the election and wanted to change the odds in order to gain financially, ordered or did the shooting. This, in fact, seemed

268. “KMT says recount shows enough irregularities to call new election,” *China Post*, July 23, 2004 (available online at <<http://chinapost.com.tw>>).

269. “Pan-blue Lawyers Concede Defeat,” *Taipei Times*, July 23, 2004, p. 4.

270. This writer was at the Government Information Office in Taipei when the news broke and subsequently spoke to a host of foreign reporters who were there. This opinion comes from that experience.

271. The writer asked reporters, as well as scholars and other observers, if they thought the shooting had impacted the election, and most said they thought it had.

quite plausible. However, the police did not accept this hypothesis. They apparently did not like it because it suggested that Chen was going to lose, judging from what the odds-makers had predicted.²⁷² This, of course, assumes that the KMT did not bet a significant amount of party funds to change the odds and make it appear that Lien and Soong were going to win, as some DPP supporters charged. That hypothesis has gone nowhere as well.

It was also theorized that a DPP leader arranged the shooting (knowing that Chen would lose) without Chen's knowledge or, alternatively, under Chen's instructions to do something, even something extreme, without saying what that might be. Or Chen ordered it. These views may or may not strain the imagination.²⁷³ In any event, there is no definitive proof. Was evidence relating to the shooting tainted or destroyed? Yes. At least that was the conclusion of forensic expert Henry Lee. But he could not say if that was deliberate or not, and that probably will never be known.

Is there anything to the charge that the KMT or the People's Republic of China, or the two in collusion, did it? Unlikely. This view was not heard much after the election. In any case, it defies logic since both Pan-blue leaders and supporters assumed that Lien and Soong were going to win and apparently so did Chinese leaders in Beijing.²⁷⁴ Furthermore, China had taken the position that it should distance itself from the election campaign, as doing otherwise would have been counter-productive. Chinese leaders, in fact, quite studiously avoided saying anything provocative or getting involved in Taiwan's election politics before and during the campaign. So why would they make an exception? Clearly they knew that if it were ascertained that they were responsible for the incident, cross-strait relations as well as U.S. ties would be seriously damaged, an undesirable outcome for them. A "rogue agent" would be a possible explanation, but that says very little.

What about the invalid votes? There was a much larger number than in the past, and the amount was far and away enough to have changed the election results. DPP spokespersons are right in

272. See "Taiwan Poll Ends in Dispute Drama," BBC, March 20, 2004 (available online at <<http://news.bbc.co.uk>>). It is still not clear why the police rejected this theory.

273. A book on this topic has recently been published. See CHU Hung-yuan, with YANG Wei-li and CHU Li-yung, *Shooting President*, Taipei: Feng Yuan Forum Co., 2004.

274. Neither Chinese leaders nor the state-controlled press said this; but all indicators say they thought so. This view is supported by Beijing's "hands-off" approach.

saying that the KMT or PFP was in charge of more of the counties where there were more than average invalid votes; but the number of voters in these counties was less.²⁷⁵ So Pan-blue had a case to make. But is it a compelling one? That is difficult to say. Pan-green argued that the rules defining valid ballots had been changed to become more strict; and the advocacy (organized to some degree) of turning in spoiled ballots helped make the number significantly larger, not to mention there was considerable disillusionment among potential voters due to the dirty nature of the campaign.²⁷⁶ Pan-green's point is true, but whether it explains such a large number of invalid votes will probably never be determined for sure.

Did President Chen ordering the military and police to stay at their posts change the results of the election? It is no doubt correct to say that they would have voted more blue than green. No one really doubts that. The numbers are difficult to analyze though. Pan-blue and the Ministry of National Defense both offered opposing but what appeared to be convincing arguments. They both cannot be right. President Chen did not need to keep the order on the entire day of the election. Yet he could argue that he needed to be cautious. The conclusion, it appears, boils down to this: The president had the right to order the military and police to remain at their posts and it was a legitimate order, if the shooting was, as he says, not staged. Hence, like the sympathy vote, this matter hinges on the truth about the shooting: whether or not it was contrived in any way.

Were Lien and Soong going to win? The latest polls, the movement of the stock market, and the gambling odds all suggested with a considerable degree of certitude that Pan-blue would win. The KMT might have bet substantial amounts of money to alter the odds and give the impression they would have won. But did they do that in the U.K.? Did blue team operatives influence both the stocks of companies seen as benefiting from a blue and a green victory? And what about the stock market index, which is much more difficult to manipulate, that indicated a blue win? It is quite a stretch to contend that the KMT did all of this.

It is likewise difficult to believe, as some DPP spokespersons have claimed, that there was no sympathy vote.²⁷⁷ It is simply rea-

275. A count of the population of the voting districts shows this to be the case.

276. "Taiwan Election 'Conspiracy,'" BBC, March 30, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/News/2004/BBC-300304.htm>>).

277. Joseph Wu, a senior Presidential Office official, said that there were no sympathy votes. See William Foreman, "Taiwan's President Narrowly Wins Reelection," *As-*

sonable to think that there was given the situation. The polls showed Chen needed to solidify his base; many of his supporters were disappointed with his performance, and a good portion seemed likely to stay at home rather than go to the polls. The shooting clearly stimulated an emotional response and made some, maybe a lot, of potential stay-at-home voters go to the polls, which was to the advantage of Chen and Lu. In attempting to answer this question one might query: Did many voters vote for Lien and Soong because of the shooting? Hardly. On the other hand, the contention that the blue camp's reaction, saying that it was staged and, in particular, Sissy Chen making such a spectacle as she did, likely helped Chen by increasing the size of the sympathy vote is doubtlessly true.

Then, for Pan-blue to say that the sympathy vote was large contradicts the fact that its leadership did not ask that the election be postponed. That seemed to be an option at the time. It appears in retrospect that blue team strategists made a huge mistake in not seeking a postponement or cancellation of the voting. And, one could ask: If they misjudged this, then it is possible that they were wrong in thinking that they were going to win anyway and that they were grossly overconfident as some DPP leaders contended?

What about exit polls? They reportedly showed that the election was too close to call. Yet some individuals contradicted that view. This being the case, why not do them over? The general response from both sides was that exit polls are not accurate — less accurate than regular opinion polls. Some also said that this was unnecessary if there was to be a recount.²⁷⁸ Still it seems that exit polls might have provided some better evidence. And what about the polls have done during the last ten days of the campaign? The problem with this is that they do not agree. Reports about them generally follow party lines. Pan-blue supporters reckon Lien and Soong were far ahead. Green spokespersons say it was very close and they had the momentum. Finally, it is difficult to know which of these polls is genuine and which is not.

The fact stands out that the final vote tally margin was so close that it is very easy to say that Pan-blue would have won had it not been for the shooting, President Chen's order keeping large num-

sociated Press, March 20, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/AP/2004/AP200304-htm>>).

278. The author asked a number of scholars and officials in Taiwan about this and was told that doing exit polls after the election would prove very little as they could not be trusted and the public would not take them seriously in any event.

bers of military personnel and police from voting, the invalid votes, or other forms of election fraud. In fact, the vote was so tight that any number of small things could have caused the peoples' will to have been measured incorrectly.

Is it true what DPP spokespersons said about the blue team having lost big if one compares, as they say one should, the percentage of the vote they won in 1996 and 2000 with the final tally in this election? Certainly it is so in the sense that the DPP made big gains over this period of time. It is very obvious that Chen and his party were on the right side of the Taiwanese nationalism and localism issues, and this made a big difference. It is not totally correct, though, to say local nationalism is as potent a force as the polls concerning the issue of Taiwan's national identity indicate. After all, Pan-green played the ethnic card by fanning the flames of ethnic ill will. Another factor is: National identity and ethnic identity in this case are difficult to differentiate. Likewise, it is apparent that the population of Taiwan exhibited more bad feeling toward China during this election campaign than is really in their hearts given the rapid growth of cross-strait economic ties. Pan-green certainly, and in a calculated way, exacerbated fear and anger of China in Taiwan. Finally, Chen had a significant advantage from his incumbency in this campaign. He got lots of free publicity being president. He certainly was not handicapped by being short of money, though how much each side spent is uncertain. Campaign finance laws in Taiwan are weak and usually are not effective. They certainly were ineffective in this case. No one knows who spent more and to what extent government funds helped them. Similarly, the KMT's outlays during the campaign as well as its financial situation are mysteries.

Did the green side engage in dirty politics in order to win? Chen and the DPP played the "race card" (ethnic card in this case) and provoked China; both worked to their advantage. Many viewed their election tactics as seeking the low ground. It was dirty politics. Racial (ethnic) politics have long been condemned in Western democracies. But politicians in Western countries continue to do it and probably will in the foreseeable future whenever they can, unless they perceive there will be a backlash or it will not work. It certainly cannot be stopped. Many would also say playing the "race card" is common and natural. Chen also risked pushing China into a war with the United States. Critics said he did not care if he started World War III. But many observers felt that he and his party had the right to say what they pleased. Democracy requires this. Others would argue that all is fair, or nearly so, in election cam-

paigns and this is included. Furthermore, most would say Taiwan's bid to act like a sovereign nation is both correct and on the right side of history. Pan-blue certainly knew it was possible, even likely, that Chen and the DPP would use these tactics. Lastly, Chen took a chance by doing it; it might have backfired. Still one must consider that if Pan-green uses these two stratagems in future elections, they may find that voters do not respond as they hoped. Certainly they sully Pan-green's image abroad, and in the case of playing the "China card", the United States will disapprove and may be less tolerant.

Is it true that Chen performed well, possibly explaining his victory, because he has charisma and had more "fire in his belly" than Lien or Soong? Few doubt this. Most gave him a meaningful edge over Lien in this department. The polls after the debates told this story, and it seemed more and more true as the campaign went along.²⁷⁹ But was Chen's charisma also partly demagoguery and was it playing to voters' emotions rather than to their rational side? There is certainly some truth to this. What about Soong? He certainly possesses charisma. But he was not on the top of his ticket, and that seemed to be crucial. The bottom line seems to be: the greater desire to win on Chen's part, whether one considers this a positive or negative, may well have determined who the victor was.

What do the campaign and the election tell us about Taiwan's future? In the weeks after the election, opinion on this was divided: Some said the causes for the bitterness would not be forgotten and that Taiwan's politics would never be the same again. Others said the effects of the election would not be long lasting. Certainly the election polarized Taiwan politically, socially, and in many other ways. It was a very divisive campaign.²⁸⁰ Pan-blue thought they would win; they were very confident going into Election Day. The defeat was thus very troubling. Pan-blue felt very strongly that they had been cheated and that the election was not honest, so they were angry.

Will this engender political gridlock in Taiwan in coming months and possibly years? Taiwan went through this in 2000, and it subsided over time. It probably will again. Many in the blue camp

279. This writer heard this from pundits, potential voters, and others during the campaign.

280. Both the Taiwan media and the Western media were full of commentaries to this effect. For example, see Jason Dean, "Taiwan: Can't Let Go," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, April 8, 2004 (available online at <<http://www.taiwansecurity.org/News/2004/FEER-080404-hm>>).

have abandoned hope of reversing the election results. A significant number want to move on. Both the troubling matter of leadership of the KMT and getting ready for the December legislative election have fueled this view. Yet some in the green bloc felt that Chen deserved to lose because of his bad performance in office, that he had become too authoritarian, and because he and the DPP had succumbed to corruption. The spate of resignations showed that. While it is doubtful these views will have too much impact on Chen's ability to govern for the moment, they may grow if they are reinforced by other problems. Factional problems, long a difficulty for the DPP, may become a serious problem. So might Chen's lame duck status, though it also gives him a reason to govern according to principles and concern himself with how future historians will treat him, rather than anticipating the next election.

The election will likely have a negative impact on Taiwan's image as a successfully democratizing nation and the notion of it having created a "political miracle."

At the time of the election, a poll was taken in Taiwan asking if respondents agreed that democracy is the best system of government that exists. Less than half said it was — the lowest among democratic nations in Asia surveyed.²⁸¹ Notably there was less heard after the election, even from the DPP, about "consolidating" Taiwan's democracy. Chinese leaders seem patently less enamored with political modernization in Taiwan after this election, so the Taiwan model for China's democratization is less attractive there — if it ever was a serious model.

Other nations were less complimentary of Taiwan's "exercise in democracy" than they were about its previous elections. This was partly a product of apprehension about Pan-green inciting problems between the U.S. and China and doubts about the fairness of the election as expressed by Pan-blue. Will this pass? Probably. However, China will likely influence many countries to avoid supporting Taiwan politically, and this may cool their praise for Taiwan's democratization — officially at least. But the Western media did not perceive this election as democratizing Taiwan as in previous elections because there were too many distractions, and Taiwan is now generally seen as already democratized.

Will the election mean the end of the KMT as some DPP stalwarts claimed after the voting? This is hard to forecast. The for-

281. Philip P. Pan, "Election in Taiwan is a Vote on China." *Washington Post*, March 19, 2004, p. A13.

mer ruling party has been in decline for some years. This may continue, spelling an eventual eclipse of the party. More likely the way this election ended will mean that the Nationalist Party will have to decide on new leaders and new strategies and, if it does, it will likely make a comeback. Favoring this line of argument, the results of elections in Taiwan over time (since 1980) to some extent suggest a cyclic pattern and that the party that did well in the last election may not do so well in the next.²⁸² One should keep in mind also that the DPP has recently avoided serious factional problems, and the KMT has not. This could change. Through most of Taiwan's recent history, it has been the other way around. Also, DPP leaders said Pan-blue was overconfident. If that was so, it seems possible the DPP may now become too confident. Finally, most in Taiwan want party competition. Still, the future of Taiwan's political parties seems up for grabs and there is no doubt there will be some rises and declines for the parties.

What about the futures of Lien and Soong? Many say that Lien has lost two elections and that he lacks charisma, which is a deadly flaw in a mass or popular democracy as Taiwan has been for a decade or so. But that cannot be said about Soong. Also Soong is younger. By Taiwan's standard he is not too old to run again. If Chen does not perform well this term, and assuming that the ethnic bias against Soong becomes tiresome and is more widely seen as morally repugnant and not good for the country, or it appears destined to not work in the next election, he may still be a viable candidate. However, he will compete with another star in the party, MA Ying-jeou, and there seems little hope that they can run on the same ticket as Lien and Soong did. Ma is also a Mainland Chinese and most agree that two of them on the ticket will not work. Legislative speaker WANG Jin-pyng, who is Taiwanese, is likely to run with one of them. There has been serious talk of him and Ma running together in 2008. But, in Taiwan's politics that is a long time away.

Finally, will this election have any permanent impact on China's stance toward Taiwan or on U.S. Taiwan policy? Relations with both Beijing and Washington were impacted negatively by the election. The election caused concern in both Washington and Beijing. During and after the campaign it caused tension between the two. But the problems for both and with each other existed well

282. This certainly seemed true of Taiwan's elections in the late 1980s and 1990s. See the author's previous works cited in footnote 1.

before this election. For Beijing the election result is certainly a more serious matter than for Washington. U.S. officials were concerned about the process being fair and unprovocative. Who won was not at issue.²⁸³ Some evidence suggests China will adopt a permanently harder line toward Taipei and that relations, including commercial ties, will be affected. Washington may put Taipei on a "short leash." Concerning U.S.-China relations, Taiwan will probably continue to be a major issue for both, but it is a matter that must be resolved outside of and notwithstanding Taiwan's democratization.

Looking at this election from various perspectives and viewpoints it is clear that democracy often generates controversy. In this case, it certainly did. It is even possible Chen's victory was not legitimate. Still, few doubt democracy is the best system for containing conflict and reconciling different views over the long run and affords many other advantages as recent democratic change in the world shows. Some may conclude later that this election was just a "bump in the road" on the way to Taiwan consolidating its democracy. Others say it depends on closure on the shooting and its impact.

283. There were, of course, differences in views among different agencies of the U.S. government regarding which side winning was better for the United States. It is also a well-known fact that the Department of State has not liked Pan-green and Congress has much better feelings toward Pan-green.

GLOSSARY

Selected Chinese Names

Chang, Shih-liang	張 四 良	Li, Jiaquan	李 家 泉
Chen, Shui-bian	陳 水 扁	Li, Zhaoxing	李 肇 星
Chen, Sissy	陳 文 茜	Lien, Chan	連 戰
Chen, Tang-sun	陳 唐 山	Lin, Huai-min	林 懷 民
Chen, Yi	陳 儀	Lu, Anneette	呂 秀 蓮
Chen, Yu-hao	陳 由 豪	Ma, Ying-jeou	馬 英 九
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